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...sochism
...merican Style
— p. 104

All Aboard: Stephen Moore on the Budget Train Wreck

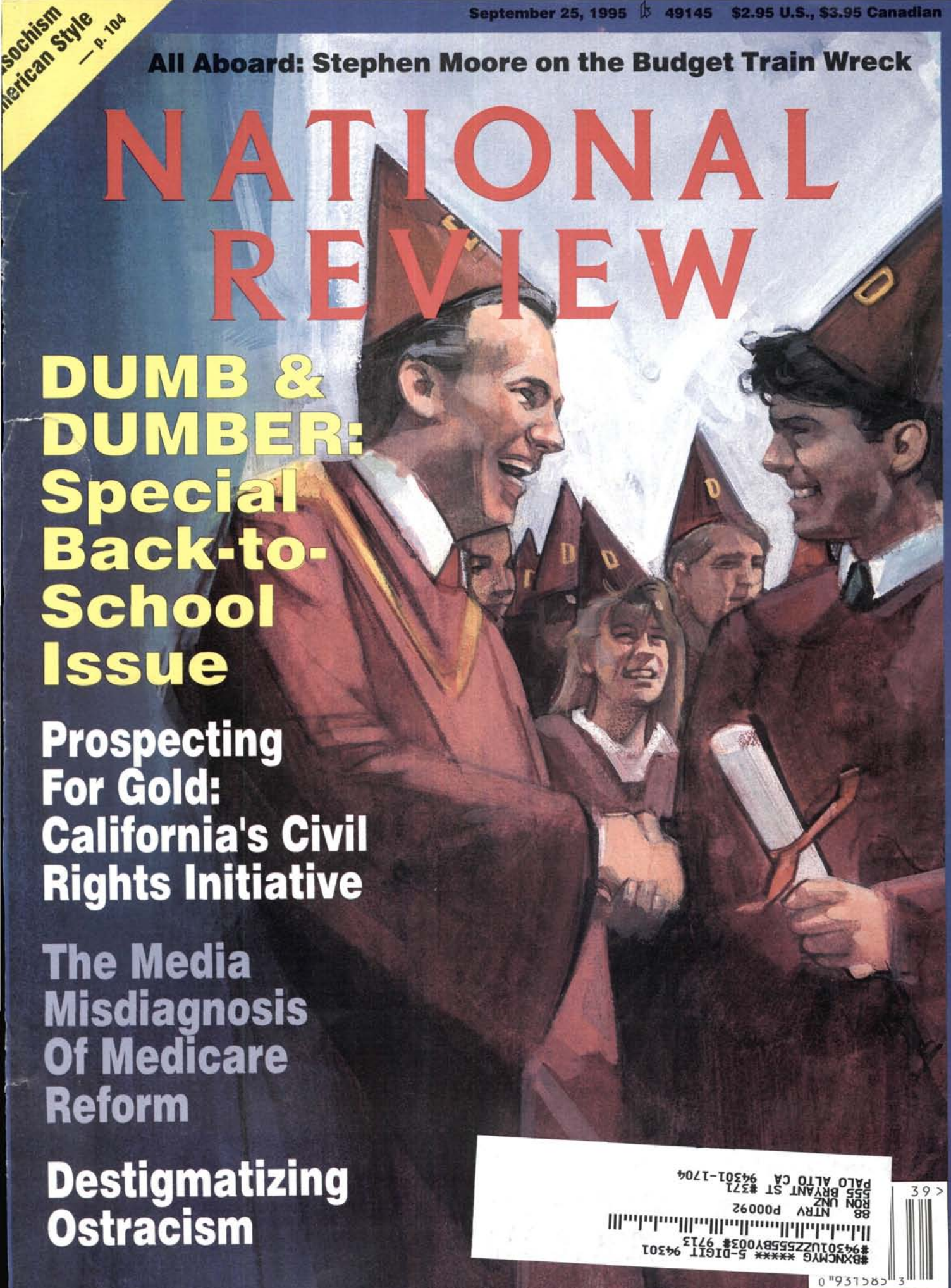
NATIONAL REVIEW

DUMB & DUMBER: Special Back-to-School Issue

Prospecting For Gold: California's Civil Rights Initiative

The Media Misdiagnosis Of Medicare Reform

Destigmatizing Ostracism



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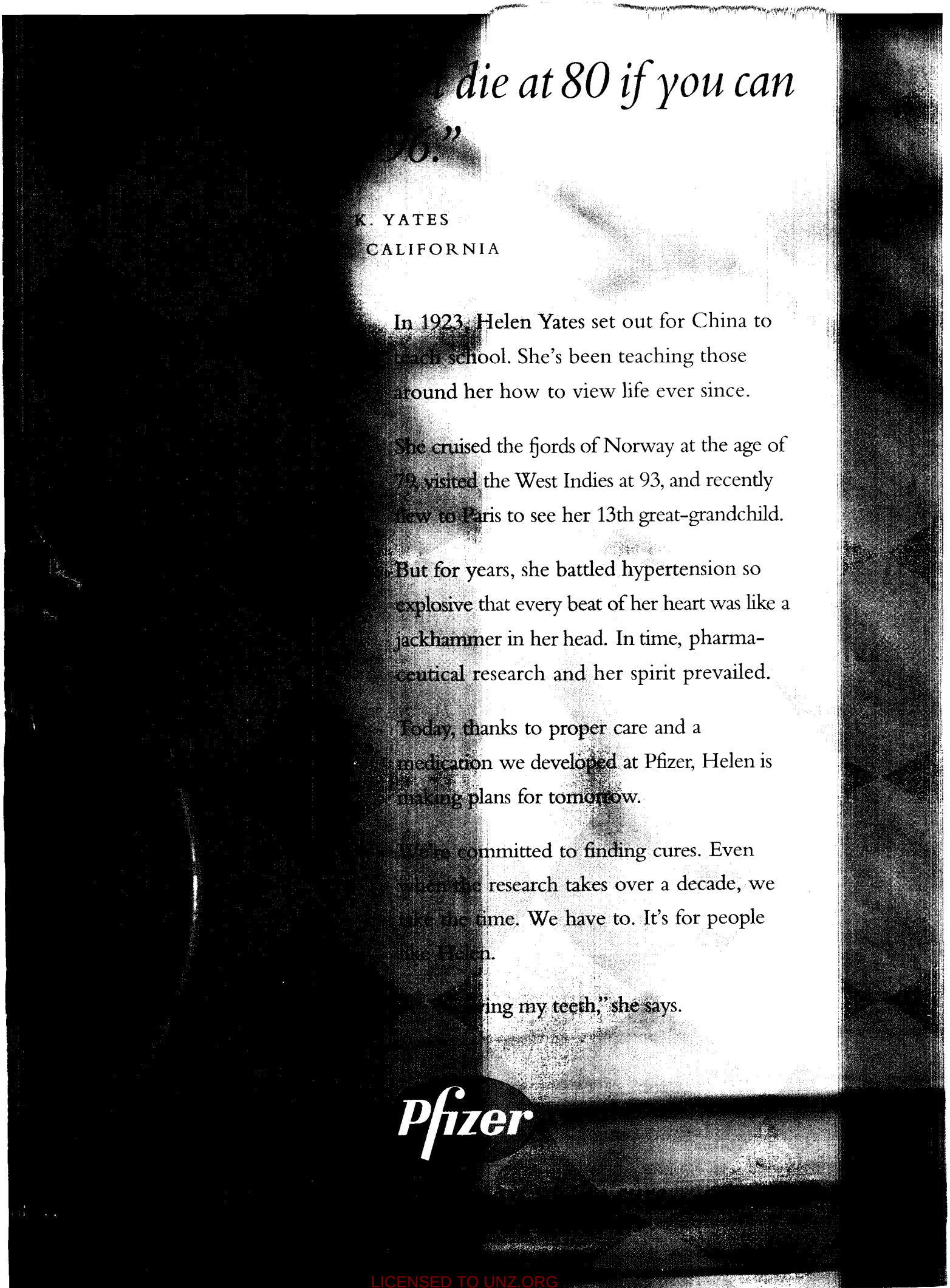

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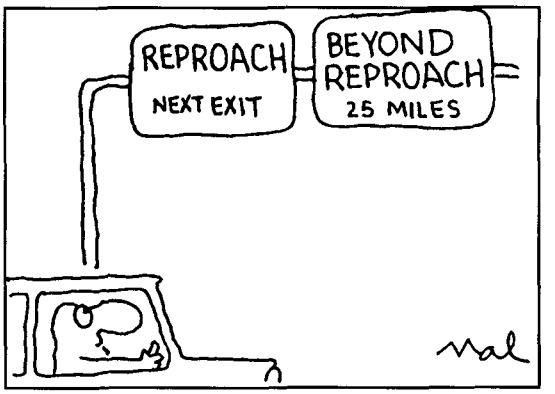

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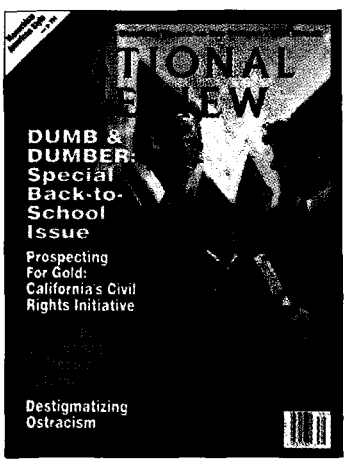
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Cover by Alex Zwarnstein

NATIONAL REVIEW (ISSN: 0028-0038) is published bi-weekly, except for the first issue in January, by National Review, Inc., at 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices.

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Address all editorial mail, manuscripts, letters to the editor, etc. to Editorial Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Address all subscription mail orders, changes of address, undeliverable copies, etc. to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668; phone, 815-734-1232, Monday–Friday, 7:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. Eastern time. Adjustment requests should be accompanied by a current mailing label or facsimile. Direct classified advertising inquiries to: Classifieds Dept., National Review, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016 or call 212-679-7330. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 668, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0668. Printed in the U.S.A.

RATES: $57.00 a year (25 issues). Add $21.50 for Canada and other foreign subscriptions, per year. (All payments in U.S. currency.) The editors cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts unless return postage or, better, a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

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LETTERS

Good God

Hadley Arkes's review of *God: A Biography* [Aug. 14] may, as much as anything, convince the unconverted that there is a God. This is, of course, with the exception of a review of *God: An Autobiography*.

Steven Reske
Minneapolis, Minn.

Barely Christian

William Murchison's "Last Rites" [July 31] reminded me of my misspent youth as an Episcopalian. Indeed, I even was, for 15 years, what is now called an Episcopal "clergyperson." Mr. Murchison did not mention the Episcopal Church's own statistics that 42.3 per cent of Episcopalians no longer believe in the Virgin Birth, the Divinity of Christ, or Christ's Resurrection. That is to say: Only a bare majority of them are still Christian.

As Mr. Murchison states, "Christianity's common understanding of priesthood was suddenly [after the 1977 ordination of female priests] a dead letter in Episcopal circles." When one poisons a well, one poisons the whole thing. There cannot be little "enclaves of orthodoxy."

Father Andrew L. J. James, PhD
St. John Chrysostom (Patriarchal)
Russian Orthodox Church
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Appropriate Appropriations?

Rich Lowry's "Misappropriations" [Aug. 14] glosses over the important fact that Republican control of the Congress will result this year in billions of dollars toward immediate deficit reduction. Instead, Mr. Lowry complains that every program he personally opposes was not immediately zeroed out. My Treasury, Postal, and General Government Appropriation bill, as passed by the House, maintains the GOP's commitment to law enforcement, terminates agencies including the President's Council of Economic Advisors, while reducing outlays almost $400 million below current spending. The President has stated he will veto my bill, and most other House-passed appropriations bills.

Yet Mr. Lowry paints me and the other 12 chairmen of the Appropriations Committee's subcommittees as "Old Bulls" who like nothing more than to spend taxpayers' money. The accomplishments that Mr. Lowry so quickly passes over include that the House-passed appropriations bills will meet the first-year targets called for in the seven-year balanced-budget plan. Previous plans to balance the budget deferred the tough choices until later. We're making tough cuts right now. We have already terminated 226 federal programs. That's the "pulling programs out by the roots" that Mr. Lowry accuses us of avoiding. And the Appropriations Committee has put 33 other programs on a glide path to zero. But I suppose Mr. Lowry's article does prove one thing: Those who can, appropriate, and those who can't, write.

Jim Lightfoot
Washington, D.C.

For years Republicans got on Appropriations so they could play with the Big Boys and nab a few crumbs for their own districts—principle be damned. Hence, Rep. Lightfoot was one of the GOP appropriators who in 1993 wrote letters to fellow Republicans threatening reprisal if they voted for the Penny–Kasich package of nearly $100 billion in spending cuts. These same appropriators suddenly profess to be gung-ho budget-cutters to avoid Newt Gingrich's giving them the boot. The GOP budget does, *in typical Washington fashion, put off its steepest cuts to the 21st century (see "Toward a Win–Win Budget,"* NR, *June 26). The Appropriations Committee has met the relatively tame first-year targets, while avoiding most of the crucial (and painful) structural changes recommended by the Budget Committee. This was a bitter disappointment for deficit hawks. But maybe it was naïve to expect anything else. After all, those who can, appropriate.* —RL

Served the Constitution Well

I thought "Warren Burger, RIP" ["The Week," July 31] evenhanded—except for one phrase, when you referred to his serving the Constitution "so haphazardly." To be sure, he was not as conservative as you or I. As his staff director for the Commission on the Bicentennial of the Constitution I once told him, not entirely in jest, that he was a "closet liberal." But generally what he did, with some sensational exceptions, on the Court and elsewhere, was conservative and compliant with the original intent of the framers of the Constitution.

I once asked Arthur Shenfield, past president of the Mont Pelerin Society, to evaluate Burger as Chief Justice. He said, "B+"—an exceptionally high mark from Arthur, who in constitutional matters was tougher even than Lino Graglia.

Ronald Trowbridge
Hillsdale College
Hillsdale, Mich.

Small Railroad

Mark Gerson, in his excellent review of *Molding the Good Citizen* [Aug. 14], says that "the importance of Harriet Tubman cannot be overestimated. She was the greatest conductor on the Underground Railroad, which did more than anything else to free slaves before the Civil War . . ." Without in any way disparaging Harriet Tubman, the fact is that—contrary to Confederate propaganda attempting to justify secession—the Underground Railroad freed very few slaves. By the Census of 1860, the total lost to their owners in that year was 803, less than one-fiftieth of 1 per cent of the slave population of nearly 4 million.

Harry V. Jaffa
The Claremont Institute
Claremont, Calif.

Tales of Mailer

Jacob Cohen's review of *Oswald's Tale* [Aug. 28] is the best thing I have seen on Norman Mailer, about whom so much has been written. Mr. Cohen is surely right to direct attention to Mailer's mythopoeic ambitions. I would add only that Mailer is always better when he takes off from a historical subject, as in *Armies of the Night*, *The Executioner's Song*, and this book. In these his characters are given to him by history, and he can embroider around them. In his novels, uniformly, he cannot give us credible characters because his powers of invention are not up to the job. To put it another way, he cannot get his own ego out of the way long enough to listen to the voice of a fictional character, and therefore cannot create a fictional world.

Jeffrey Hart
Lyme, N.H.

Correction

Mea culpa. Of course The Mick died not on August 7 but on August 13 ["The Week," Sept. 11]. How I mistook the date, which I had checked just minutes before recording, can only be explained by my mind's eye seeing that unmistakable number 7 on that mighty back. In the event, I do apologize.

James T. Como
Bronxville, N.Y.

Editor's note: Letters of 200 words or fewer have a greater chance of being published.

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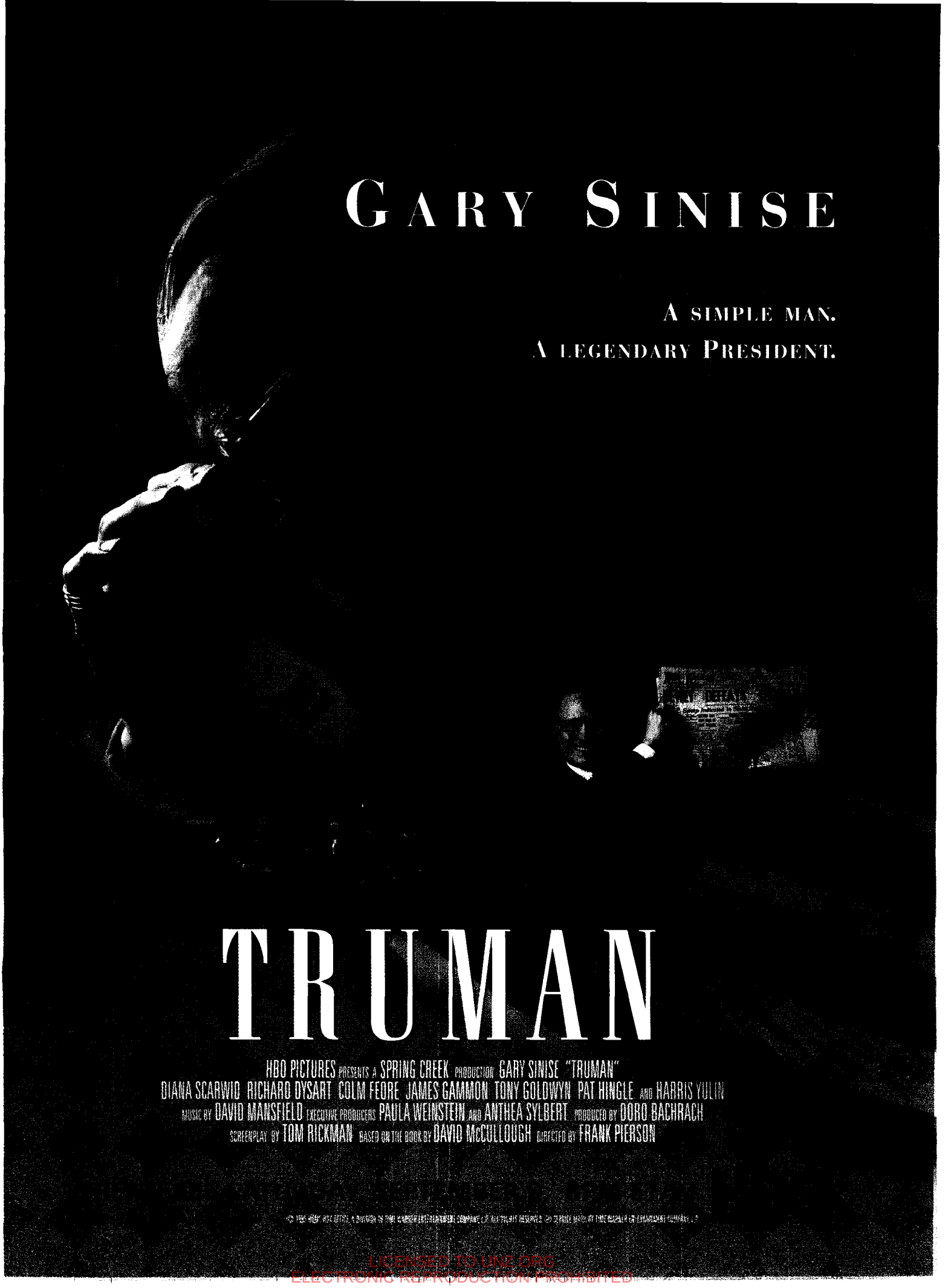
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FROM THE EDITOR

Not Away from It All

■ My vacation in Grenada coincided precisely with the fall of the Berlin Wall, which, if nothing else, should establish that I do not possess the legendary nose for news that defines the true journalist. All in all, this has been a comfort to me.

This year, however, my attempts to get away from it all have been less successful.

With its grand hotels, topless beaches, seafood restaurants, and general air of *la dolce vita*, Nice might seem a world away from the cruelties of the Bosnian war. Yet the war is just around the corner geographically, and there seems to be strong approval among the holidaymakers for the decision to bomb the Bosnian Serbs' heavy artillery.

It looked like a mainly French affair on local TV, with a French general in blue UN beret smoothly reciting the successes of the NATO airstrike. But it was, of course, a U.S.-led decision, even if a belated one. Four years after Jacques Poos, Luxembourg's foreign minister (and thus the representative of 350,000 tax dodgers), warned the U.S. to let Europeans solve this European problem, America has finally taken control.

We do not know how successful this American initiative will be; we can only be certain that it cannot be less successful than a European-led policy that has produced countless deaths and refugees on an assumption of Serb invincibility, which recent Croat and Bosnian successes on the battlefield have shown to be a brutal fantasy.

Whether coincidentally or not, the U.S. policy appears more popular than the European solution with ordinary Europeans.

■ Even before the NATO raids, we had been inundated with local news. French Finance Minister Alain Madelin had just been fired for proposing to cut government expenditure by reducing state pensions and welfare payments.

Mr. Madelin had said: "A family with two children which is on welfare and other payments earns more than a family which gets up early in the morning and goes to bed late at night to earn the minimum wage."

No one really contests the truth of this statement. But when the labor unions erupted with displeasure, Mr. Madelin was dismissed by Prime Minister Alain Juppé.

If Mr. Juppé will not tackle France's underlying economic problems when his government is newly in office, extremely popular, and anticipating the benefits both of a cyclical upswing and of the general European recovery, he will never tackle them. They may be concealed for a while, but eventually they will reemerge, aggravated by the cowardice evidenced in Mr. Madelin's firing.

And if this were not all clear from the fact of Mr. Madelin's dismissal, it would be established by Mr. Juppé's justification for it.

"I will act with pragmatism," he said. Ah, pragmatism—the argument always put forward by those who are continuing with policies that everyone knows are doomed to fail eventually.

Or as the French might say: "Nothing is so impractical as the pragmatic."

■ Meanwhile the newspapers here report ominously that the talks between the European Union and Morocco on a new fishing accord have broken down. I found this worrying, and my anxiety was heightened when I learned that the Canadian Fisheries Minister, Mr. Brian Tobin, has been visiting southwest England to thank Cornish fishermen for their support of Canada's fishermen in their dispute with the European Union. His visit was in turn disrupted by demonstrators against Canadian seal hunting.

Admittedly, there was no mention of any link between Brussels and the pro-seal demonstrators. Nor did the paper report that Mr. Tobin would be vacationing in Morocco during his European trip. One cannot help wondering, however, how it will all end.

If the EU record in the Balkans is anything to go by, stock up on fish now.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

NATIONAL REVIEW

September 25 issue; printed September 6

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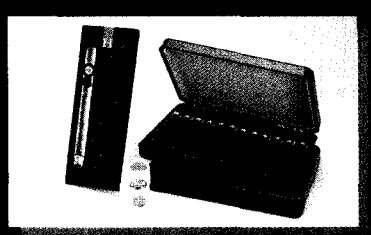

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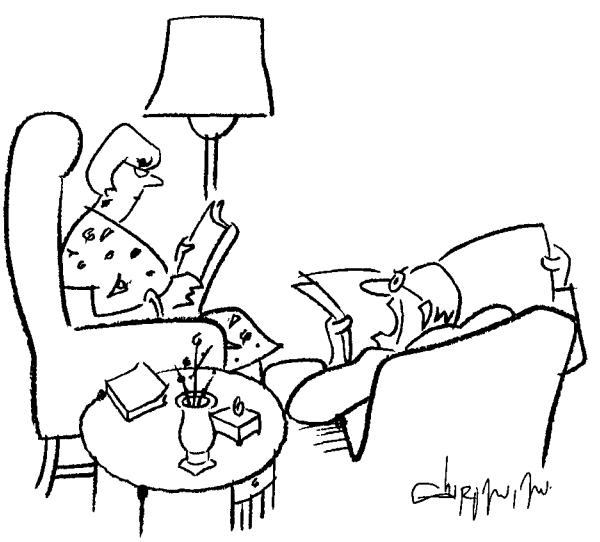
FOR THE RECORD

■ **Bob Dole** hits first downdraft in nomination bid in Ames, Iowa, straw poll. *Newsweek* notes: "Dole's campaign has stumbled whenever he's ventured beyond his familiar Senate lair," warns campaign "may be only one misstep away from the kind of shake-ups [Dole] has engineered in the past," although for moment campaign manager **Scott Reed** and deputy manager **Bill Lacy** are "safe." . . . **Bob Novak** reports conservative Dole advisor **Don Devine** being pushed aside. . . . Campaign ignited mini-firestorm by returning $1,000 check from Log Cabin Republicans, a gay group. Log Cabin executive director **Richard Tafel** says Dole campaign solicited money, then, post Ames, "basically figured they could write off the gays because they need the right wing." *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial headline: "The Dole Way: If You're Down, Kick a Gay." . . . A **Pete Wilson** aide suggests a new Iowa strategy for Bob Dole: replace Scott Reed with **Ralph Reed**. New Southern strategy? Replace **Sheila Burke** with **Delta Burke**. . . . Dole drops 7 points, from 42 to 35 per cent, in *Time*/CNN poll. Undecided column picks up the slack, jumping to 25 per cent. Rest of field in single digits. . . . Pete Wilson announces presidential bid—again—hits illegal immigration, affirmative action in speech with Statue of Liberty as backdrop. (**Mario Cuomo** suggests changing inscription to "Let us send back your tired, your poor, your huddled masses.") . . . **Lamar Alexander** campaign runs New Hampshire radio ads highlighting Wilson's former support for tax increases, affirmative action, scores California governor as "political chameleon." . . . Continuing buzz around possible independent candidacies. *The New Yorker*'s **Hendrik Hertzberg**, noting **Ross Perot** won 19 per cent after he "had spectacularly proved his unfitness," asks: Could a **Colin Powell–Bill Bradley** ticket win? "There is every reason to think so." . . . *Wall Street Journal* reports Pentagon is "immune to the hype" surrounding Powell. Senior officers criticize "Powell doctrine"—military interventions should only be undertaken with overwhelming force—as too risk-averse. . . . **George Will** on Powell: his views on the centrality of racism and the unequal distribution of wealth "are shared by millions of good citizens. They are called Democrats." . . . In Dole–**Clinton** race Colin Powell comes in at 27 per cent, both Perot and Bradley at roughly 17. . . . Documentary "Inside the Republican Revolution," produced by conservative **Michael Pack** and hosted by **Donald Lambro** of *Washington Times*, airs nationally on PBS on September 13.

■ Presence of New Jersey ex-Gov. **Tom Kean** (R.) in official delegation to Peking conference on women supposed to make U.S. representation "bi-partisan." But rest of delegation consists of Clinton officials; non-government delegates include **Marilyn Monahan**, secretary-treasurer of National Education Association, and **Marie C. Wilson**, president of the Ms. Foundation for Women. . . . *Wall Street Journal*'s **Al Hunt** debunks conservative assault on draft agenda by noting word "mother" appears 13 times. But Independent Women's Forum head **Barbara Ledeen** notes most of those references are disparaging. (IWF distributes buttons: "Sex Is Better than Gender.") . . . Chinese restricted demonstrations in connection with conference to a special area in school yard. Demonstrations "should not slander or attack leaders of the host country," explained one official. . . . Delegate **Lynn Cutler** tells *Washington Post*'s **Judy Mann**, "The more light that you put on these issues . . . the more you help drive home the point that there are inequities here that must be addressed." President Clinton announces task force to implement plans arising from conference. . . . Government advice to Chinese police officers, hotel desk clerks, or others who might encounter naked woman protesting at Peking conference: Throw a white sheet or coat over her. Taxi drivers urged not to pick up naked women in their cabs.

■ Subcomandante **Marcos**, Mexico's masked rebel-by-press-conference, is angling for a left-wing political party, leaning heavily on Liberationist Catholic support, especially Bishop **Samuel Ruiz** of San Cristobal de las Casas. But a "referendum" on future of his group turned out less than 3 per cent of eligible voters. . . . Mexican Pres. **Ernesto Zedillo de León** is trying, with $2-billion bailout, to head off a "debtors' strike" by 7.5 million credit-card holders, cutting interest rates by as much as 45 per cent in a 13-month restructuring period. . . . Tough-talking **Ryutaro Hashimoto**, MITI minister who faced down Clinton Administration trade negotiator **Mickey Kantor** on autos, heads for leadership of Liberal Democratic Party (Japan's largest party) and possibly the prime ministership. Foreign Minister **Yohei Kono**, chief spokesman for conservative reformers, withdrew, faced with certain defeat. . . . Recent deployment of new super-quiet nuclear-armed subs off U.S. East coast "may have been intended as a reminder of Russia's residual power," according to former Pentagon official **Robert J. Murray**; Russian sub force will be 15 per cent larger than American in year 2000. . . . **Gen. Aleksandr Lebed**, former commander of 14th army in Moldova, will run for Russian Duma in December elections, with polls showing him beating **Boris Yeltsin** 38 to 8 in subsequent presidential elections.

■ **Elizabeth Taylor** and husband number seven **Larry Fortensky**, announcing separation, say: "We both hope this is only temporary."



"Do you realize that right this very minute, someone, somewhere, is figuring out a way to pass his increased costs on to us?"

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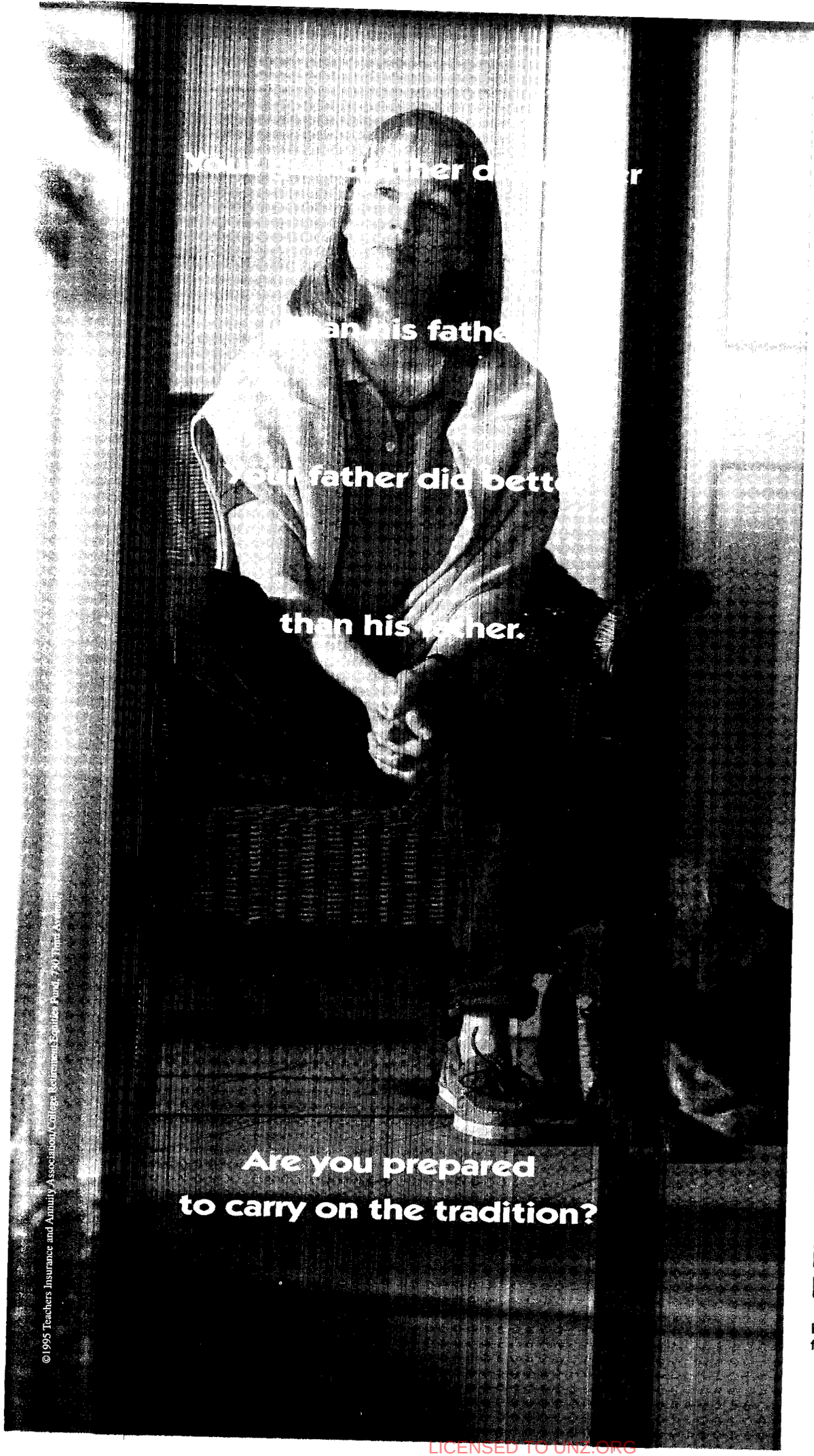

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THE WEEK

■ President Clinton has been in California 19 times in the last two years, almost equaling the number of visits to the state by Governor Pete Wilson.

■ When Bob Dole told the American Legion that "English should be acknowledged once and for all as the official language of the United States," and that "alternative-language education" should stop, he was attacked by GOP rivals Pat Buchanan, Pete Wilson, and Richard Lugar—on the grounds that they had thought of it first. Slowly and steadily, the GOP establishment is realizing that the American identity is more than a Hefty bag. Immigration has worked historically because it has come in digestible waves, and because immigrants have conformed to a common culture. Senator Dole and his fellow candidates are learning the language of common sense.

■ Bob Dole isn't taking any chances. While his presidential campaign was returning a $1,000 contribution to Log Cabin Republicans, aides were at his apartment throwing out all his old Liberace albums.

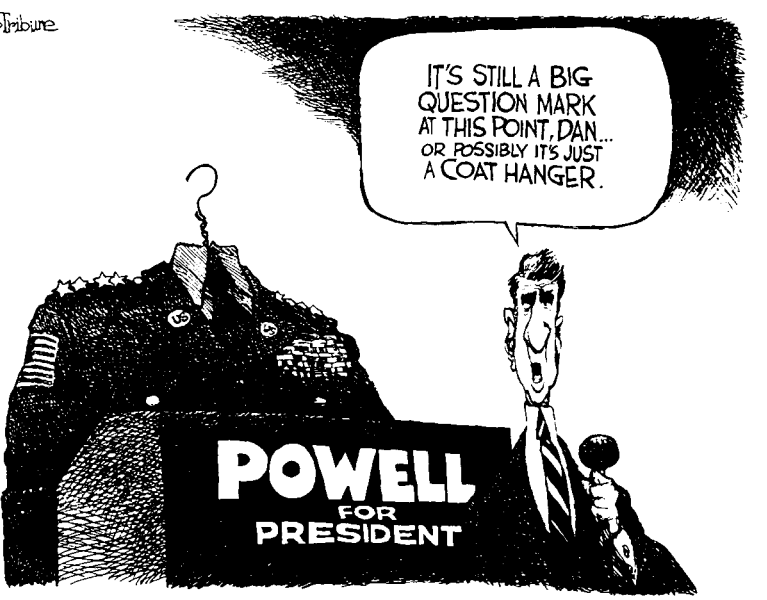
■ The blade on the guillotine of GOP revolutionaries is again looking a little dull. The Legal Services Corporation, you'll remember ("War on the Poor," by Rael Jean Isaac, May 15), channels federal funds to state-level legal-aid groups that tend to stray from their mission of helping the poor into, among other things, attacking welfare reform, fighting the anti-drug efforts of public-housing authorities, and even, according to a report in the *New York Post*, attempting to foment prison riots. Rep. George Gekas (R., Pa.) is pushing a plan that would send LSC funding directly to the states and eliminate the Corporation entirely. The problem is Republican weak-knees on the House Judiciary Committee, foremost among them Rep. Bill McCollum (Fla.), a conservative and nice guy who sometimes seems unaware of his party's new majority status. On the Senate side, Phil Gramm is committed to deep-sixing the LSC. But he may well be blocked by his Appropriations subcommittee's Republicans, notably Pete Domenici (N.M.) and Mark Hatfield (Ore.). At one hearing, Domenici brought in Republican attorneys to flack for the Corporation. With partisan enemies like these, the LSC needs no friends.

■ How come a certain B-movie actor and former football player is allowed to sit at the lawyers' table to watch the Fuhrman trial?

■ As the back-to-school sales were gearing up, a coalition including Wisconsin's Republican Governor Tommy Thompson and Democratic State Representative Polly Williams enacted the nation's first true school-choice program for low-income families. Some 5,000 Milwaukee children—the maximum number that private and parochial schools could find desks for on short notice—had been enrolled when, on August 25, the Wisconsin Supreme Court granted the ACLU's request for an injunction to stop the program in its tracks. But it didn't stop. The schools told the choice enrollees to come to class as planned. PAVE (Partners Advancing Values in Education), a local group that was already operating a privately funded scholarship program for poor families, announced an emergency fund appeal. Inner-city pastors, Democratic Mayor John Norquist, local talk-radio hosts, the Association of Commerce, the Catholic archdiocese, the Bradley Foundation, and two former secretaries of education, William Bennett and Lamar Alexander, joined the appeal. With big checks from the wealthy and little checks from the not-so-wealthy, PAVE raised over a million dollars in two days and was able to provide a lifeboat for parental choice while the Court decides from exactly where in the penumbra of the Bill of Rights the requirement for compulsory education in godless government schools emanates.

■ Give credit where credit is due. Dick Morris's decision to launch bombing raids in Bosnia just might work.

■ The centenary of Booker T. Washington's once-famous Atlanta Exposition address will be celebrated on September 18. By any measure, Washington's


MATELY/Chicago Tribune
IT'S STILL A BIG QUESTION MARK AT THIS POINT, DAN... OR POSSIBLY IT'S JUST A COAT HANGER.
POWELL FOR PRESIDENT

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A view from Washington

MITSUBISHI MOTORS IN AMERICA

It was back in 1982 that Mitsubishi Motors first brought its name brand passenger vehicles into the U.S. market. We sold just over 40,000 cars and light trucks in our first year of operation; this year, we'll sell well over 230,000.

But we don't want you to read this so we can brag about how many cars we sell. What we want you to know is that our growth has resulted from a carefully planned, long-term strategy that has succeeded in melding the technological expertise and environmental sensitivity of Mitsubishi Motors Corporation — one of the world's largest automobile manufacturers — with the activities of a full-fledged American corporation — Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America, Inc.

Made in America

Of all the steps taken in these last 13 years to evolve into a truly American organization, the single most important one has been the establishment of a U.S. manufacturing operation. Early on, Mitsubishi Motors entered into a joint manufacturing venture with Chrysler, and in 1988 the venture began producing cars under both companies' nameplates. In 1991, Mitsubishi Motors assumed full ownership of the venture, called Diamond-Star Motors.

Today, Diamond-Star, a two-million square-foot facility located in central Illinois, produces Mitsubishi Motors' two top selling cars in the U.S. — the Galant mid-size sedan and the Eclipse sports coupe. Together, they'll represent 60% of the passenger cars that we'll sell in the U.S. this year.

Our decision to transfer production of the Galant from Japan to Illinois represents a billion dollar net gain for America's balance of trade with Japan, per year.

And Diamond-Star also builds cars for export to Canada, Europe, South America, and Asia, which contributes to a more favorable balance of trade between the U.S. and its foreign trading partners.

Sourced in America

Diamond-Star has an ongoing program to expand the use of North American production suppliers. Under this program, the operation will spend over $1.7 billion this year on North American purchases, representing over a 200% turnaround (on a constant calculation basis) since 1988. And those expenditures will account for the fact that locally sourced content in our Galants and Eclipses should exceed 70% under the Environmental Protection Agency's fuel economy reporting procedures. Our plans to increase the use of domestically built engines and transmissions will raise that domestic content level even higher in the future.

Employing Americans

To build cars in the U.S., Diamond-Star employs nearly 3,900 Americans. More than 3,200 are production and maintenance associates represented by the United Auto Workers. Countless other Americans are employed as a result of Diamond-Star's purchases of parts and services from facilities in 27 states.

Diamond-Star is only one part of the Mitsubishi Motors equation in the U.S. As the exclusive U.S. distributor of Mitsubishi brand passenger vehicles, we and our rental car and finance subsidiaries directly employ another 1,700 Americans. Not to mention some 15,000 employed by independent Mitsubishi Motors authorized dealerships nationwide.

Continuing Our Economic Contributions

So you see, we've come a long way since 1982. And we'll continue to grow, not just by producing and selling more passenger vehicles, but by keeping our products and pricing competitive. How will we do that? By expanding our U.S. production volume, increasing domestic content, increasing exports of our U.S.-built cars, and by reducing imports in our product mix. These steps will continue what has become the Mitsubishi Motors "tradition" of Americanization — creating jobs all across the country and contributing to the U.S. economy.

For further information, contact: Anna Schneider — Director, Government Relations/U.S. Operations at (202) 223-5732.

A View From Washington is a series of essays sponsored by corporations and associations. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the magazine.

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speech was a classic of American oratory. But his message to his fellow blacks—"cast down your bucket where you are," cultivate practical skills rather than political agitation—has long been buried by the present-day civil-rights establishment, which prefers the blackmailing rhetoric of Washington's rival, and eventual Communist Party member, W. E. B. Du Bois. In fact, Washington worked quietly through the courts to combat Jim Crow. And the tactics of a man who literally rose up from slavery and spent his life educating his people in the post–Civil War South should not have been lightly gainsaid. Now that Great Society–type social engineering has left many blacks even more hopelessly enmeshed in what Pat Moynihan famously described as a "tangle of pathologies," there is a quiet revival of interest in Washington's emphasis on self-help. He understood a truth about the social processes of capitalism that generations of intellectuals who came after him did not: "No race," he said, "that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized." That wasn't the only thing he understood, as witness an even more buried but relevant part of Washington's message: his appeal to employers, at the beginning of the last Great Wave of immigration, to "cast down your bucket" among American blacks rather than looking, for the promotion of prosperity, "to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits."

■ Three of an estimated five genders showed up en masse in Huairou (which means "Place of 6½ Vowels"), China, evidently to beat up on the opposite sex, and on each other.

■ Social Notes, Santa Monica, California: When a fat 40-year-old man handcuffed his hands behind him and jumped into Santa Monica Bay in a suicide attempt, Michael Jackson's plastic surgeon, Dr. Steve Hoefflin, dived in and rescued him. The 911 call was placed by Heidi Fleiss. No word yet on who's starring.

Get Out and Get Under

They call him Jump-Start Wilson
Because his rig won't move,
Though immigrants look anxious
As vocal cords improve,
But last week in the Apple
The lady in the bay
Watched Wilson kick the starter,
Then call the Triple A.

—W. H. von Dreele

From the *New York Times* sports section, September 2: "Paul Robeson was the greatest football player of his time. He was also renowned as an actor, a singer, and a scholar. But he is best known for being what he really was not—a Communist." And Stalin was lethal from the single wing, and Beria sang a good "Ol' Man River."

Fighting the Educrats

As THE Back-to-School section of this magazine illustrates profusely, the ruin visited upon our schools and universities by their own administrators, boards, and staffs is proof that ideas have consequences, and that bad ideas have disastrous consequences.

There are exceptions, sure. Now and again one finds a teacher, a professor, even an entire school that cherishes truth and knowledge and swears by high standards, hard work, and discipline. Some young people are fortunate enough to have such precepts instilled by parents or pastor. Thus, American society squeaks by.

But think how much better we'd fare if the 50 million students attending our 110,000 schools, and the 15 million more enrolled in our 3,600 colleges and universities, were all being taught by adults who held the values now termed "old-fashioned" only because most educators have forsaken them.

Education isn't rocket science. Its essentials are mostly matters of common sense. As Chester Finn and Diane Ravitch wrote in a recent Hudson Institute report, what youngsters need from their schools are "high standards and caring, competent adults who can help them make solid progress toward those standards. They need safe schools populated by people who want to be there, schools that nurture sound character and demonstrate good values . . . They need a curriculum that imparts essential skills and important knowledge. And they need to know that the 'real world' values and rewards good education."

That's not what most are getting. Instead, they're being taught by people who, for many years, have been breathing the vapors of progressivism, modernism, and relativism, consuming trendy "innovations" by the plateful, and quaffing the notion that government knows best and that the bigger and more distant the government the more it knows.

Because such beliefs permeate the intellectual classes, the education bureaucracies, the staffs of legislative committees, the professional journals, and—especially—the colleges of education that control entry into classroom and principal's office, they shape virtually every aspect of contemporary education.

A superb new study by Stanley Rothman and his colleagues at Smith College's Center for the Study of Social and Political Change shows, for example, how

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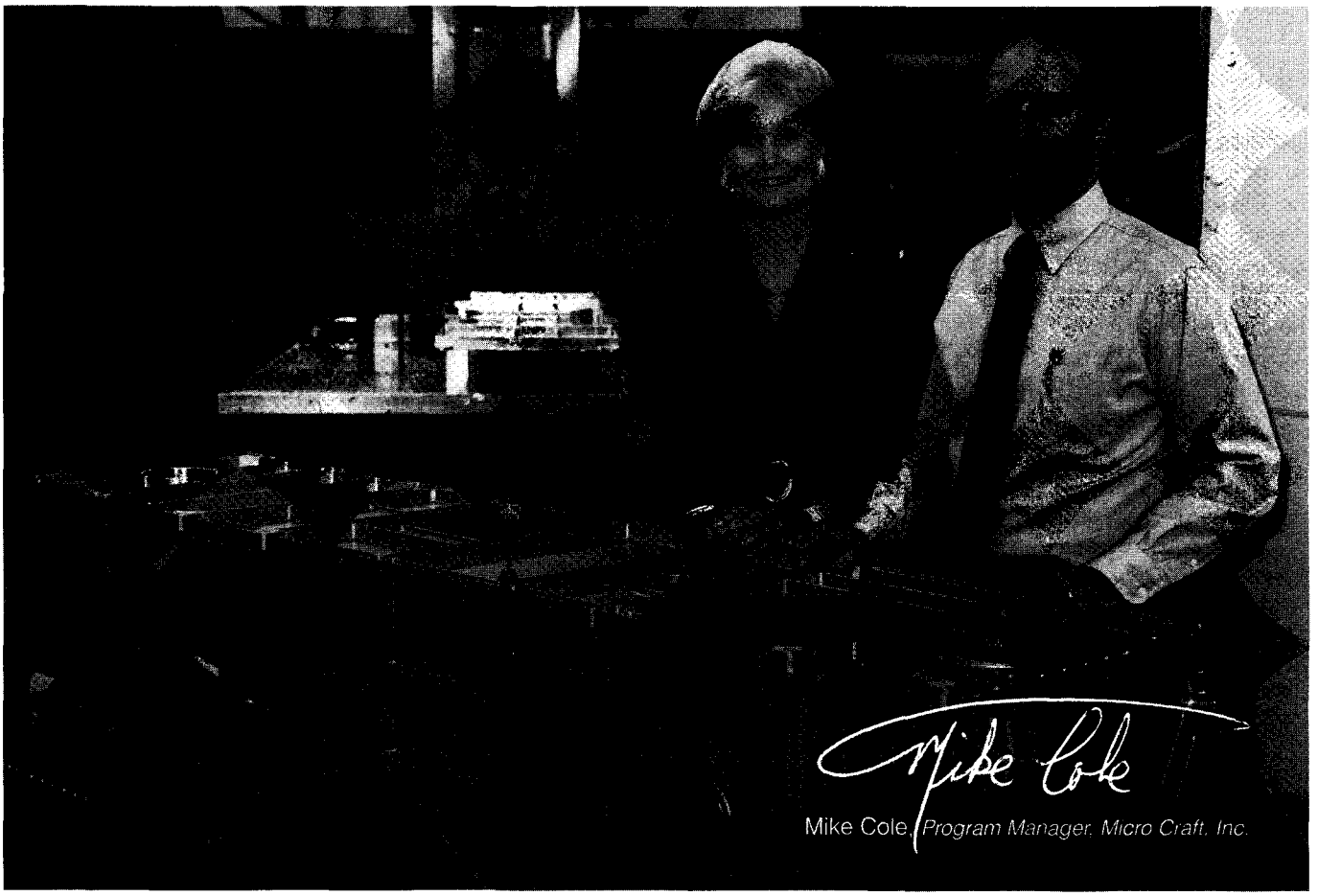
The Space Station. It's about life on Earth.

PROGRESS REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1995



Micro Craft's CEO, Fran Marcum, and Program Manager Mike Cole pictured with a Space Station internal node assembly.

"THE SPACE STATION WILL AFFECT THE LIVES OF MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD. IT'S ALREADY AFFECTING THE LIVES OF HUNDREDS HERE IN TENNESSEE."

"When most people think of aerospace manufacturers, they think of big companies. But we're a fairly small business, and we've built precision mechanical parts for a whole series of space programs. Today, we're responsible for the internal outfitting of the Space Station's Node 1, Node 2, and Cupola. We've already built more than 1,800 pieces of hardware, and many of those pieces will be on the first delivery flight to orbit. Micro Craft may be a small company, but we're making a big contribution. We take a lot of pride in that."

Moscow, Russia

Russia's Khrunichev space center and station prime contractor Boeing signed a $190 million contract in Moscow last month. The contract keeps the development of the Space Station's first flight element on track. The "space tug" being built by Khrunichev will launch in November 1997, provide initial power and propulsion, and become the first building block in station assembly.

Huntsville, Alabama

Skylab astronauts Jerry Carr and Bill Pogue, who set a long-standing U.S. space endurance record of 84 days in 1974, have donned space suits again. They worked with a team of Boeing engineers testing station hardware in an underwater facility. The tests, completed last month, simulated how components will be maintained on orbit.

BOEING

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"radical egalitarianism" determines the content of high-school history textbooks (*Molding the Good Citizen*, Praeger, 1995). The political correctness that Lynne Cheney and others spotted in the recent "national history standards" was no aberration. It's what our children are being taught today.

Combine bad ideas about the ends of education with a government near-monopoly of the means—a monopoly that has long been bent to the interests of teachers' unions and other powerful "provider" groups—and we have a formula for catastrophe.

Which is pretty much the situation today, notwithstanding noisy efforts by the Clinton Administration, the College Board, the unions, and a passel of Panglosses to convince us that all is well (except, of course, for spending, which should be increased, and federal programs, which should be defended against the dread Republicans).

Ignore them. For a truer appraisal, consider the findings of the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development:

> Viewed in an international perspective . . . the average achievement scores of American children range from mediocre to poor, depending on the subject matter . . .
>
> While it is true that American schools do a particularly poor job of educating blacks and Hispanics, one should not conclude that white students in middle-class suburbs are uniformly well served. In mathematics and science . . . the nation's top high-school students rank far behind much less elite samples of students in other countries . . .

Blessedly, though, some chinks have appeared in the educrat cartel. Four developments are especially hopeful:

First, though the judicial shoals must still be navigated, the Wisconsin and Ohio legislatures have enacted real voucher programs, the kind that allow their recipients to take public dollars to any school in Milwaukee or Cleveland, including private schools. Several more states are on the verge of similar actions.

Second, the notion that public education means identical schools staffed by government employees and run by a big bureaucracy is crumbling. Several hundred independent "charter" schools are operating—eight states have authorized them—and more are coming, many initiated by fired-up parents. Four of Chris Whittle's Edison schools are up and running, and half a dozen communities have contracted with private firms to manage some of their public schools.

Third, some of the monopoly's political pillars are cracking. Several states have curbed the bargaining rights of teachers' unions. Dissident state superintendents and board members are defecting from their national organizations. And the 1994 election results show that establishment PAC contributions and scare tactics need no longer determine who wins.

Fourth, after thirty years of Great Society–type programs, mounting red tape, and GOP passivity, Congress may actually undo some of the education mischief in Washington. Talk of abolishing the Education Department is mainly symbolic, but what the House of Representatives did to the 1996 budget—including zeroing out Mr. Clinton's pet Goals 2000 program—is serious. If the Senate doesn't wimp out, Uncle Sam's roaming hands could finally get cuffed.

That's just a start, of course. So long as the ambient educational ideas remain toxic, the nation will struggle for breath. But the occasional whiff of fresh air at least reminds us that it doesn't have to be the way it is.

THE RONALD KNOX PRIZE

1st Prize -- $10,000

The Ronald Knox Prize will be awarded to the finest new translation of designated portions of the Latin Mass of the Roman Catholic Church. The translations will be judged by a jury for literary grace and clarity, for their capacity to be read aloud and for their assumption of God's authority and solicitude. Participants will be provided with the Latin text and current English texts for their reflection; conscientious regard for essential meaning will be assumed by the judges. Entries must be submitted by February 1, 1996.

For those wishing to participate please write or call:
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Cutting the Tax Cut

DURING a recent TV interview, beleaguered Senate Finance Committee Chairman Bob Packwood was asked by Robert Novak if there would be a tax cut this year. Packwood responded with a sigh: "I'm hopeful." And the check is in the mail, the government is here to help you, and Senator Packwood will respect you in the morning. Even if Senate Republicans do approve a tax cut this fall, it's likely to be a far cry from the bold Reaganite vision in the Contract with America that helped make Bob Packwood a committee chairman. The Contract promised a $350-billion tax cut over seven years—including a $500-per-child income-tax credit for overburdened families, an end to the marriage penalty, repeal of the Clinton tax hike on senior citizens, a capital-gains tax cut, and expansion of IRAs to boost savings.

In the House–Senate budget conference early this summer, GOP leaders trimmed the package to $240 billion in order to pacify party moderates. Now the Senate Republicans are squawking at even the Lite version. They want to shrink the package to as little as $150 billion (still over seven years). That barely pays for the family tax cut alone. It leaves almost no money for capital-gains tax relief or any of the other pro-growth tax changes vital to the con-

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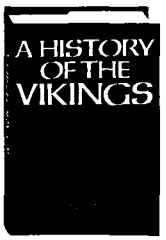

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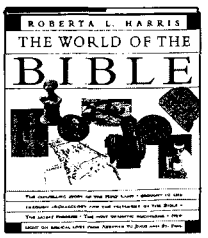

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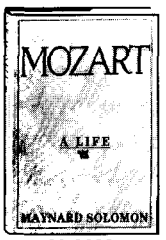

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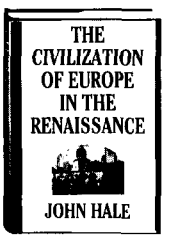

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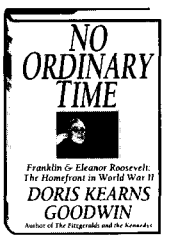

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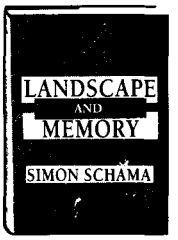

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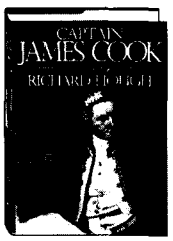

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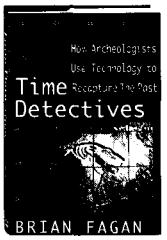

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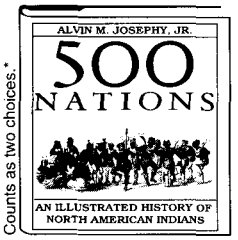

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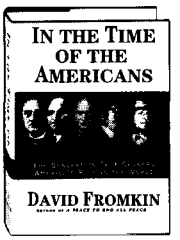

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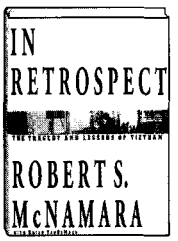

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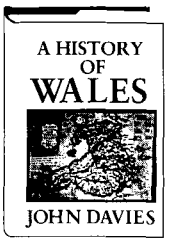

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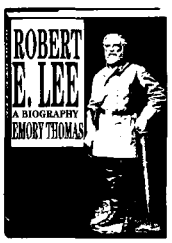

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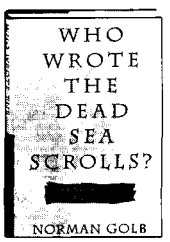

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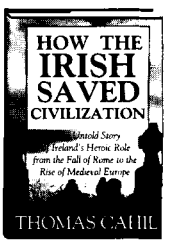

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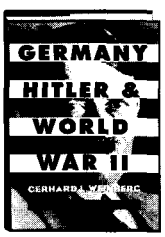

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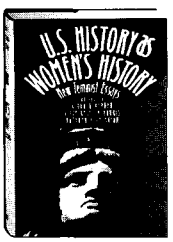

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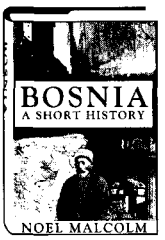

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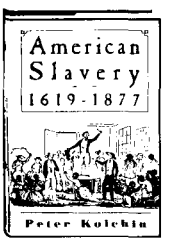

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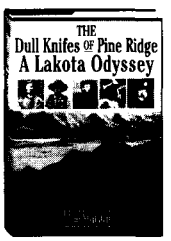

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servative revolution. Embarrassingly, the Senate GOP is threatening to pass a smaller tax cut than Bill Clinton himself proposed earlier this year.

For some mysterious reason a large voting block of GOP senators regards the Contract tax cuts as a political loser. This is precisely what House Democrats thought round about last October. Senate Republicans also maintain that since they were never actual signatories to the Contract, they are not bound by its terms. But voters will hold all Republicans accountable for the fate of the Contract. If it is not signed, sealed, and delivered to America this fall as promised, the majorities in both houses will be in jeopardy—and rightly so. No politician in American history ever lost an election for cutting taxes, but the political graveyard is crammed with the corpses of tax raisers.

Will the tax cuts compromise the mission of balancing the budget? We're talking about a 3 per cent reduction in federal revenues. Only in Washington would a 3 per cent tax cut be derided as a massive, unaffordable giveaway. More important, economic growth is a key component of deficit reduction; and tax cuts, especially capital-gains-tax-rate reduction, are a key stimulant to that growth. If the economy were to grow just one percentage point faster each year over the next seven years, the deficit would fall by half.

House Republican Conference Chairman John Boehner had it right earlier this year when, in the midst of a budget debate, he threw up his hands in frustration and groaned: "It shouldn't be this hard to cut taxes." So far cutting taxes has proved to be excruciatingly hard. Failing to do so could be even harder on Republicans come November 1996.

At Long Last

IT IS too early to assess the effectiveness of NATO's massive air strikes against Bosnian Serb military targets. Nor should anyone believe that the authors of the previous policy of appeasement have necessarily seen the error of their ways. Right up to the moment before serious use of air power began, the British Foreign Office was calling for a "political settlement"—meaning pin-prick air strikes and more pressure on the Bosnian government to cede land to the Serbs. And with the traditional winter period of military stalemate now approaching, the momentum of NATO's action could be lost in wrangling over details of the (still obscure) U.S. peace plan.

Yet with all those caveats, the air strikes have undoubtedly helped foster a just peace. They have demonstrated that the West is serious in demanding an end to the siege of Sarajevo. They have forced Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to take direct responsibility for his Bosnian Serb creatures in peace talks, which may bring them into line. Finally the strikes—along with Croatia's re-taking of the Krajina region and the relief of the Bihac pocket in northwest Bosnia—have significantly shifted the balance of power against the aggressor. Once most Serbs really believe they face defeat on the battlefield, they will be more likely to replace their extremist leaders with moderates.

But if the full implications of the air strikes for the Balkans have still to be worked out, the implication for the West is clear as crystal: without American leadership at all levels—political, diplomatic, and military—no effective Western response to aggression is possible. If America had insisted on a vigorous reaction to Serbia's original aggression against Croatia in 1991, the Bosnian war would never have begun. The justification advanced by the State Department at the time was that war in Yugoslavia was essentially Europe's affair. In this view, of course, the United States was more than encouraged by the Europeans themselves, who were busy erecting the framework of an ambitious European superstate in the Maastricht Treaty. But it quickly became apparent that Europe had neither the will nor the means to act.

The world needs, even if it does not always like, American leadership. With the success of the new policy in Bosnia, the world may be more prepared to accept it—and America to offer it.

Hillary's Women

THIS week, Hillary Clinton, Winnie Mandela, Jane Fonda, Benazir Bhutto, and 30,000 other women are in Peking, attending the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women. Officially, the goal of this conference is to "empower women"; this will be achieved, according to the draft of the "Platform for Action," through a bewildering array of government policies, ranging from the "conversion of military resources to peaceful purposes," to providing "special programs in mathematics, science, and computer technology" for girls.

Alas, when drafting this Platform for Action, the UN neglected one important point: namely, that there is no known correlation between "pro-woman" government policies and female happiness. The Soviet Union was once widely believed to be a haven for women, as was China: sexual inequality was officially abolished, women could work (indeed they had to), and women had access to abortions (indeed there was no other form of contraception available). Were Soviet women thus happier or healthier than their counterparts in supposedly more "sexist," less "progressive" countries of the West?

It's striking, in fact, how closely the well-being of women correlated with two phenomena unrelated to policies: a high level of economic development, and a stable social order. As GDP rises, female health improves and female illiteracy disappears. At the same time, as

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At the First Turn

Dole's still ahead but gimping.
Gramm burps from all that straw.
Buchanan's in the running,
Which makes the touts hee-haw.
Pete Wilson could be glue-bound.
The rest are eating dust,
Except for Colin Powell,
Who's posing for his bust.

—W. H. VON DREELE

families break up and numbers of single mothers rise, so do levels of female poverty.

Yet economic growth is generally achieved through fiscal and monetary prudence, a decent legal system, and entrepreneurial dynamism, none of which can be brought about through conference attendance. As for social cohesion, its definition varies not only from country to country but from village to village; it is hard to see how any gathering of 30,000 people could agree on what it is, let alone how to encourage it.

In the end, most of what will be discussed at this conference—gender roles, colonialism, military spending—will not matter very much to women at all, except to a small coterie who will receive jobs in new, government-funded women's quangos which will no doubt spring up all over the world in its aftermath. But then, who would expect a conference dealing with the problems of half the human race to be anything but banal? No one, after all, would expect anything but nonsense to come out of a UN conference devoted to men.

Come On In

AS everybody who could considerably matter knows from advance notices published everywhere, next week *The Weekly Standard* begins publishing. It is, to undertake the little recapitulations expected of the press, the conservative weekly journal of fact and opinion sponsored by Rupert Murdoch and headed by William Kristol. Mr. Kristol is joined by John Podhoretz and Fred Barnes, and by associates David Frum, Andrew Ferguson, and David Brooks. All of these figures are familiar to readers of NATIONAL REVIEW and have been reading NATIONAL REVIEW throughout their young lifetimes. Put it this way: Any mistake you hear from them, it's our fault.

Sure, we feel the bracing wind of competition, sort of. When our magazine was incorporated, under the auspices of our attorney, William J. Casey, we named it *The National Weekly*. We had then a call from Albany, where records of this kind are kept: We could not use that title because it was too similar to *The National Liquor Weekly*. So we changed it to NATIONAL REVIEW, and published every week until we ran out of money. We went then to a fortnightly, and on the odd week published, for twenty years or so, an eight-page *Bulletin*. When we dropped the *Bulletin* it was without unbearable pain at our inability to speak every week. We considered, a couple of years ago, a re-transformation into a weekly and decided against it, but to give the reasons why would be uncouth at exactly the moment when Bill Kristol, who served up until a month ago as a Director of NATIONAL REVIEW, has chosen to proceed with a conservative weekly.

It is true, also, that the political climate is hot at the moment. When Goldwater and even Reagan were running for President, strides toward public learning were done at an appropriate gait: once a fortnight, even though the dosage was heavy, seemed quite enough. In the age of CNN, many will reasonably wish more, more often. Or, even, less, more often.

The first issue of *The Standard* will give Charles Krauthammer, Fred Barnes, and David Frum on Newt Gingrich and the Republican Congress. Mr. Kristol will write about a Powell candidacy, Lynne Cheney will review the movie *Kids* (those kids should be stuffed in a urine bottle and made to look at a crucifix). And Andy Ferguson will describe the Democrats' nervous breakdown—a weekly feature?

. . . Hard to beat, that fare. We look forward eagerly to reading the *Standard*, we wish our brothers every success in the world, and we promise our readers that no matter what lies ahead, they can count on their magazine (that's us) staying on, *primus inter pares*. The fortnightly touch.

So bon voyage to the *Standard*, and happy sailing, and remember that the vessel on the starboard tack has the right of way. —WFB

William Kunstler, RIP

IN recent years, William Kunstler almost succeeded in transforming himself into a celebrity defense attorney, an older, sloppier Alan Dershowitz, taking on obnoxious defendants in sensational cases supposedly for the good of the adversarial system.

He was in fact something much worse than that: a hard-core radical whose clients contributed, however obliquely, to his own program of social sabotage. Kunstler remarked that he would defend only clients whom he "loved." His lovers ran the gamut from the Chicago 7 to the World Trade Center bombers: left-wingers or anti-Americans, every one. His last infamous client was Colin Ferguson, the black racist mass-murderer, whom he sought to defend on the grounds

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The most far-reaching proposal *ever* from a sitting congressional leader

After the Contract with America, what next? Rest on our laurels?

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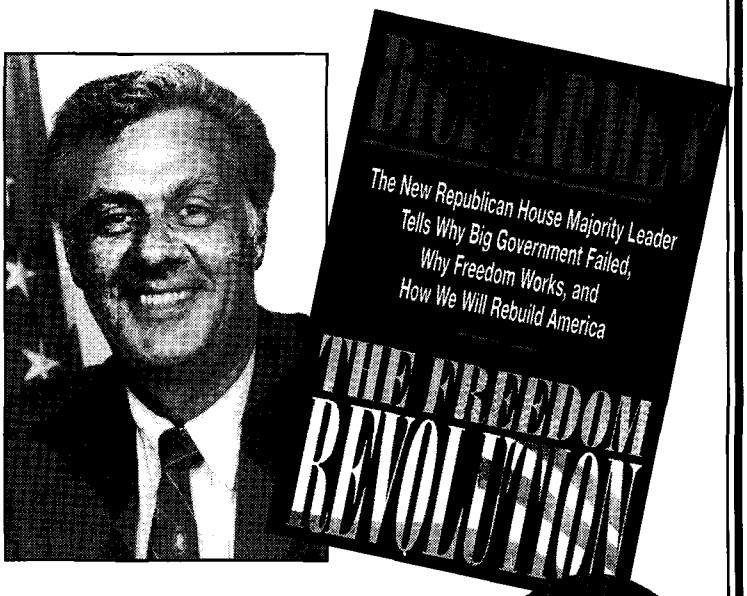
- *Scrap the tax code*; replacing it with a flat tax
- *End the government monopoly on public schools*—returning power to parents
- *Free the economy* from arrogant federal regulators and "put all the little *potentates on the Potomac* in their place."
- *Social Security*? Hold government to the same standard as private investment funds.
- *ZERO tolerance for lawbreakers,* taking the profit out of crime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- "The politics of greed always comes wrapped in the language of love."
- "Compassion without understanding can be cruel."
- "You no longer have to be knowledgeable at all to be an expert. You just have to be 'concerned' or 'passionate.' . . . I will never forget the congressional hearing I once watched on agriculture policy. The witnesses: Jane Fonda, Jessica Lange, and Sissy Spacek—on hand to share the knowledge they'd recently acquired playing farm women in movies. . . .
- "Republicans, haunted by the fear that the public will not understand, are reluctant to state their views bluntly. Democrats are always afraid the public will understand, so they distort information early and often."
- "You can't put your finger on a problem when you've got it to the wind."

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that "black rage" had unbalanced him. But Ferguson was so unbalanced that he defended himself.

Mr. Kunstler goes before a Judge Whose system he cannot subvert.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Memo to: Bill
From: Reid [F. Reid Buckley]

Bill: You asked me to recall our experience with Jaime, years ago. Here it is—

A SOMBER male voice interrupted the regular program on Radio Madrid to announce that Jaime Mora de Aragón, brother of Queen Dowager Fabiola of Belgium, reigning nabob of the jet set of Marbella on Spain's fabled Sun Coast, was dead, of a massive heart attack.

I thought back to the early summer of 1957. My brother John and his wife were having supper at the old El Morocco when a sad-eyed Spaniard in faultless evening dress reached over from a neighboring zebra-skin-covered booth, flourished a gold lighter under my brother's unlit cigarette, snapped a flame to life, and said in lordly fashion, "Allow me."

Introductions followed. Jaime was masquerading as the "Duke of Imperio" at the time. John admired the diamond-encircled lighter. "It's yours!" exclaimed Jaime. "No no no," he insisted when John remonstrated. "My pleasure entirely!" Upon which he giggled engagingly, as though astonished at his own folly.

Which he undoubtedly was. That weekend he was John's guest in Lakeville, Connecticut. He played piano like Peter Duchin, sang in a wonderful, deep, thickly accented voice, loved everything he was shown, told impossible stories of which he was always the hilarious butt—and charmed the entire family. Next thing I knew my wife Betsy and I had acquired him as a house guest for the next seven months.

Jaime became at once the center of our existences. I don't remember laughing so hard so often or enjoying another human being so hugely and unreservedly. He was soon the center of social life in northwestern Connecticut. His unfailing good humor and generosity were legend. Listening to the sad tale of a garage mechanic who had had to drop out of college because of financial difficulties, Jaime peeled five hundred dollars in crisp bills out of his wallet and handed them to the man. When, in nearby Millerton, New York, he came across a lonely old lady who was housebound, he forthwith devoted two afternoons a week to visiting her, whipping up spicy Spanish dishes for her supper. He spent hours entertaining our wheelchair-bound father; he spent long afternoons permitting rambunctious nieces and nephews to duck him in the pool. Departing for New York or Washington or St. Louis on mysterious missions that lasted as long as ten days at a time, he returned to present us with extravagant gifts: a TV set, or (for me) a 12-foot braided rawhide Spanish bullwhip, with which he taught me how to crack cigarettes from between the lips of trusting friends. He decided to build me a pheasant pen as a grand surprise; to his crushing humiliation, it collapsed on him in a heap of chicken wire and struts the very eve of its planned unveiling.

Never mind. He loved our hilltop abode so much that one afternoon he grabbed a camera and limped all over the woods and fields snapping rolls of pictures of it, telling us that it was the most *beeyoutiful* house in all New England and quite possibly all Christendom. His limp? Oh, he had got that on the Russian front, single-handedly eliminating a Russian machine-gun nest.

One bright September morning I heard him whistling in the guest room. "Come in, Reid!" he called cheerily. There he was screwing his monocle down into his right eye and studying his image in the full-length mirror. The lens of the monocle was clear glass, which should have tipped me off. He was wearing a dashing pair of brand-new riding breeches, custom-tailored black knee-high boots, a saffron-colored silk shirt open down to the third button, where the magnificent gold chain he wore with its cluster of religious medals glittered beneath a rakish ascot. His mane of black hair was swept back and pomaded; he reeked of talcum powder and Puig Essence of Lavender.

"Where are you going, Jaime?" I asked him.

"Why, New York. Just for the day."

"For a gallop in Central Park?"

"I always dress to go riding when I go to New York," he replied airily. Then he giggled in his disarming fashion.

I got the story of his arrival from a friend. Jaime pulled up at the Plaza Hotel in the fire-engine-red Ford convertible he had leased or bought from the garage mechanic's brother-in-law, his two enormous Great Danes in the back seat, the black-and-white and ever-menacing Lushka, and the even larger dun-col-

It's Sink or Swim

Mr. Clinton, whose tummy went "Ugh"
When the Muslims would give him a tug,
Took the plunge, which will mean
He'll emerge squeaky clean
Or go down with the bathwater (glug).

—W. H. VON DREELE

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AMERICA'S NEWSPAPER

The Washington Times

April 17 – 23, 1995 NATIONAL WEEKLY EDITION $2.50

Coalition to offer 'Contract' for families

By Larry Witham
and Laurie Kellman
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

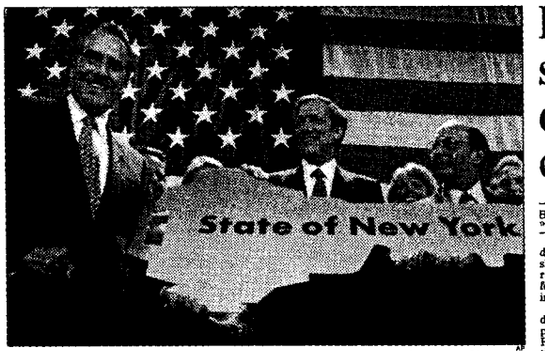
The Christian Coalition, the nation's largest political coalition of religious conservatives, will deliver a "Contract With the American Family" to Congress when it returns from the Easter recess.

"The surveying is in the final stages, and we think we'll have something in a week or two," said coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed in a telephone interview. "We will present it to Congress when they get back."

In a speech to 150 students at Kennesaw State College in Atlanta on April 11,Mr. Reed outlined seven points that he called "the gist" of what a final document might contain.

That same day House Speaker Newt Gingrich was being feted at a banquet across town.

The Reed speech came after a massive mailing by the Christian Coalition in February and March to solicit priorities for social reform and raise money to pay for a survey of 2 million "Christian voters."



Sen. Bob Dole, left, accepts a "key to the state" from Gov. George Pataki, center, and Sen. Alfonse D'Amato after speaking at a fundraiser April 10 in New York.

Dole decries assaults on values

By Ralph Z. Hallow
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

DES MOINES, Iowa - Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole accused the entertainment industry of poisoning the minds of American youth while government assaults the values and moral codes taught in churches public schools would go far toward restoring a moral society.

"Voluntary prayer is forbidden in our classrooms," he told more than 1,000 people in the atrium of the state Capitol. "The moral code we nurture in our churches and synagogues is under attack from our government. We need our schools to once again reflect the Americans, Mr. Dole said, "One of the most alarming aspects of government intrusiveness has been the assault it has waged on our values."

At campaign stops on April 11 in Columbus, Ohio, and Des Moines, Mr. Dole railed against the entertainment industry.

"Every parent knows," Mr. Dole

Pattern seen as defections continue

By Donald Lambro
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The growing list of Democratic defections to the GOP is sending shock waves through the Democratic Party's leadership, which fears further congressional losses in 1996 and beyond.

Democratic officials deny the desertions are part of a long-term political realignment favoring Republicans. But some Democratic strategists and rank-and-file activists think it's going to get worse for the Democrats before it gets better.

"Yes, it's going to get worse. It's going to go on for a while. You're going to see some more switches by some of these fellows who want to stay in office and who think that changing parties is the way to do

Rep. Nathan Deal

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ored Boabdil. Jaime stopped the car at the foot of the hotel's steps and got out. A beefy New York Irish cop yelled at him, "Hey, you there—you can't leave that vehicle in the middle of the street!" Jaime did not break stride; he tossed the keys of the Ford at the cop (who instinctively snatched them out of the air), saying, "Park it for me, my good man, I thank you! Lushka! Boabdil!" he then called, sweeping up the steps into the hotel without a backward glance. But then, he never did look back.

DEAR Jaime was a swindler. The brother-in-law of the garage mechanic to whom he had been so generous never got paid for the Ford. The old lady in Millerton happened to have a niece whose husband was flattered to lend the Spanish blueblood a few hundred dollars while, poor fellow, he waited for his *pesetas* to be converted by Riggs Bank in Washington. The pictures he had taken of our house, he used to sweet-talk a bank in St. Louis into believing that he owned high-grade mortgageable property: the deed to which he had had forged with the same skill displayed on the deed of his ducal title, ostensibly stamped and sealed by the *Diputación de la Grandeza*. In Washington he had courted a socially prominent young lady and meanwhile cadged a loan from her politically prominent father. When out of the blue a crisis concerning Jaime's inheritance demanded his immediate return to Spain, Betsy and I swallowed our sorrow; and then spent months fending off the complaints of people he had borrowed from or bilked, including my brother John. He never took one red cent from Betsy or me. He never sullied his own nest.

Which is what he told a reporter when he was asked why he always put on white gloves to play the "Fabiola Waltz," a composition in honor of his sister: "I would not sully her name." That was in 1962, five years after he had left Connecticut. He had in the meantime married a Mexican movie star (Rosita Arenas), then skipped that country with her jewels and (reportedly) a Rolls-Royce he had paid for with a check drawn on his brother-in-law's account.

He was exiled from Spain by the Franco government as an embarrassment and scraped a living in seamy nightclubs in Paris and Rome, playing the piano. He eventually had to flee Italy: to the day of his death Italian authorities had a warrant out for his arrest on charges of fraud involving millions of *lire*.

Finally he was let back into Spain, where he started a nightclub, acted in low-budget girlie movies (he played himself), cultivated his image as a splendid though outrageous aristocrat (he *was* that, a younger son of the Marqueses of Casa-Riera), took up with Khashoggi, and in Marbella bit by bit attained first solvency, then credibility, then repute, and finally renown as the heart and soul of the Sun Coast's hedonistic society.

I had not laid eyes on him in 36 years, not since I treed him in Madrid and extracted from him (he was temporarily flush), by waving a (false) extradition order in his face (it was a parking ticket from the City of Hartford), full restitution for all the debts of which I had knowledge. Betsy and I were divorced; I was to marry a Spanish girl whose great-grandmother happened to have been the sister of Jaime's great-grandmother. He married a long-suffering and utterly devoted Swedish woman, Magrit Ohlson, who, I am told, protected him and to a certain degree imposed discipline and decorum on him. To fawning doormen and desk clerks he was Don Jaime; to his intimates, Jimmy. The capacity for laughter never deserted him. That infectious giggle continued to gladden the stuffiest moments. His generosity of spirit, which was genuine despite all, graced him until the end, as did his unfaltering faith in a loving God.

He was 70. His funeral was the social event of the year. His ashes were escorted by a whole troop of mounted policemen, and the flag above the city hall of Marbella flew at half mast. A boulevard will surely be named after him, maybe even the casino. I choose my words carefully. Jaime Mora de Aragón was a scapegrace, a mountebank, and a rascal; but he had style. God Almighty undoubtedly loved him for that and has forgiven him every peccadillo, as have his thousands upon thousands of friends and acquaintances and creditors, who will miss him and wish him eternal rest. While reaching back to their hip pockets to make sure their billfolds are still in place. —FRB

—Reid, thanks. Dear Jaime. May he rest in peace, which is unlikely. **—WFB**

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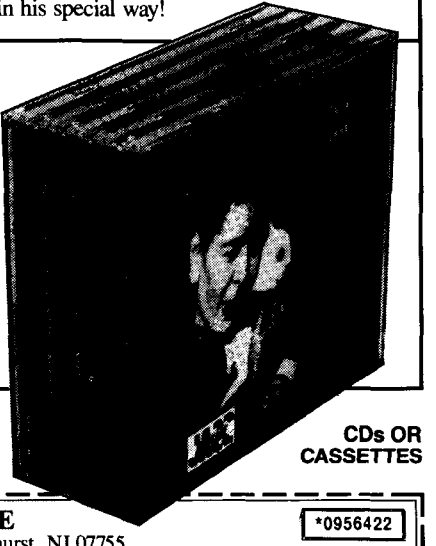

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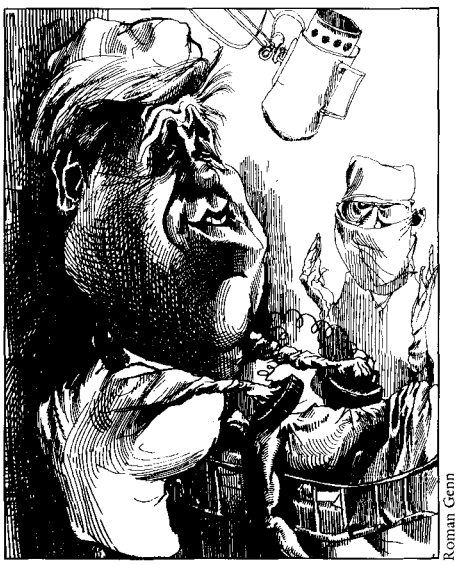

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

CONGRESSIONAL Republicans won't unveil their plan to "preserve, protect, and strengthen" Medicare until mid September, but critics are already attacking it. The Democrats are scaring senior citizens with talk of a Republican plan that doubles or triples premiums. The Republican Right has its own darkest fears. But there's a less to the criticisms than meets the eye.

Take President Clinton's position: that Medicare's growth must slow, but that the Republicans' goal—$270 billion in savings over seven years—is draconian. In fact, Clinton's own target is not much smaller. Almost all the press coverage obscures this point by contrasting the $270-billion figure with Clinton's $128-billion target. That's misleading, because the two sides are using different baselines: the Republicans measure their savings against the Congressional Budget Office's projections of what Medicare will cost over the next seven years ($1,692 billion), whereas Clinton relies on the projections of his own Office of Management and Budget ($1,628 billion). The difference between the two spending plans is actually a mere $78 billion. ("Ten billion dollars a year? That's a rounding error in this town," says Bob Moffit of the Heritage Foundation.) And projections for the "out years" (in this case, 2001 and 2002)—when much of the difference would occur—are notoriously unreliable.

Mr. Ponnuru is NR*'s national reporter.*

Conservative think-tankers are worried that the Republican plan might force the elderly to join managed-care plans. They want senior citizens to have the option to stay in traditional Medicare or to put their share of its funds in medical savings accounts (MSAs), managed-care plans, or other private options; and they oppose any tilt as a form of governmental rationing. Numerous high-profile conservatives signed a letter last month urging Speaker Gingrich to support a level playing field. Phyllis Schlafly, the National Right to Life Committee, and others have blasted the alleged tilt in public.

A mid-August press leak of options under consideration by the Republicans fueled much of the criticism because it included measures stacking the deck against MSAs. Conservatives also grew nervous at the sight of a number of ex-Republican officials simultaneously lobbying for managed-care organizations and advising party leaders. Jake Hansen, vice president of the Seniors Coalition, suggests that Republicans might favor managed care for the prosaic reason that they are familiar with it. "Members of Congress . . . have a natural proclivity to go with what's known. Consequently when you're talking with them, it just automatically comes up—managed care as a solution." MSAs, in contrast, were being dismissed as recently as early 1994 as "a far-flung libertarian crusade" (Ruth Shalit's description in *The New Republic*). They take time to explain, and the claims made for them can sound too good to be true.

The tendency of some conservatives to romanticize private-sector successes in health care also encourages a favorable view of HMOs. A comment by pollster-cum-pundit Frank Luntz—"Managed care is part of the free-market system; the fact that people who are on it pay less shows that there's something that works there"—exemplifies this intellectual failure. Moffit argues, "What too many conservatives don't understand is that the current health-insurance market is not a market at all—it's governed by a set of tax incentives that block the collision of supply and demand. When people talk about the model of the private sector, they're not talking about anything Adam Smith would consider a market. . . . When people use the private-sector corporate experience as their model, they are frankly barking up the wrong tree."

So it's understandable that right-wingers would worry. But Hill Republicans say the complaints are unfair. "The plan that we come out with is going to be a conservative plan that conservatives should be proud of," says Ari Fleischer, spokesman for the House Ways and Means Committee. Moffit is still suspicious: "I'm concerned any time the Republicans are involved in health policy." Peter Ferrara of the National Center for Policy Analysis, formerly a sharp critic of the Republicans, has been placated. "They're going to offer a fabulous plan. . . . The national press has gotten this completely wrong. They're reporting that it's going to be an HMO plan, but all that shows is that the national press does not know how to cover Republicans." But Republicans will have to avoid praising managed care or risk giving a false impression of their plan.

THE Congressional Budget Office could present another stumbling block for Republicans. Supply-siders have long criticized the CBO's refusal to take account of the impact of tax cuts on behavior when making revenue projections. A similar problem is developing on Medicare, with the CBO reluctant to score savings from free-market reforms because of difficulties in estimating how many seniors would choose each option and the effectiveness of the options in reducing costs. The CBO is, however, willing to score savings from holding down payments to

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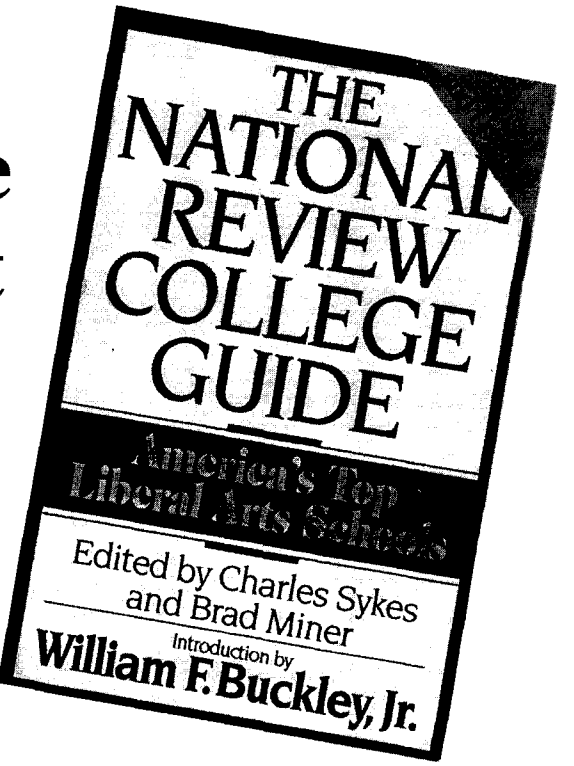
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health-care providers (which is the main way Clinton achieves his savings).

Some Republicans are therefore tempted to include that policy in their plan. But Moffit notes that Congress has habitually tried to rein in costs through price controls, and has cut reimbursement to doctors alone 75 times since 1966. Costs have continued to skyrocket, and the controls have probably reduced the quality of care. But Republicans think that CBO certification is important for the sake of credibility, so they will have to hope for charitable treatment by the agency. It's the price they are paying for not having challenged the CBO on taxes at the start of the year.

Despite all the criticism they have received, the Republican drive to reform Medicare has been reasonably effective. Luntz cites Republicans' success in framing the issue: half the public realizes that they are slowing the rate of Medicare's growth rather than cutting the program, and three-quarters of the public knows that Medicare is in danger of bankruptcy. "I don't think the Democrats ever thought we would succeed this much this fast." Kellyanne Fitzpatrick of the Polling Company adds, "Four months ago, you walked into a focus group with seniors and they said, 'You tell those Republicans that if they touch our Medicare, they're going to lose the majority.' Now they say, 'If you don't fix my Medicare, you'll lose the majority.'"

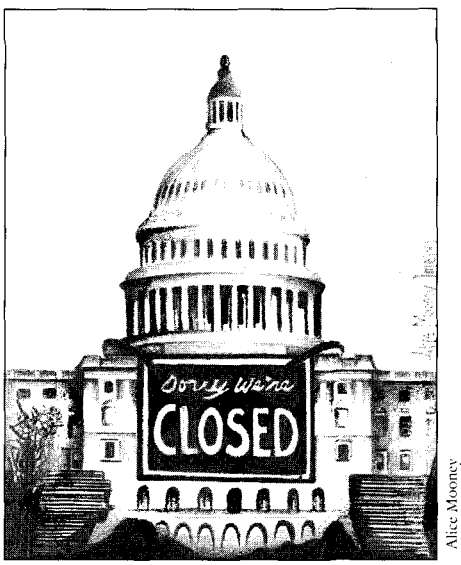
Luntz attributes the success largely to the "heroic efforts" of Rep. Dan Miller (R., Fla.) and Sen. Bill Frist (R., Tenn.) in coordinating the Republican message on Medicare. The Republican National Committee has also approached the campaign with vigor and professionalism, issuing frequent press releases and daily fact checks on Medicare. "This is a different RNC," says Grover Norquist, head of Americans for Tax Reform. "Partly [it's] the leadership of Haley Barbour, partly the lack of a Republican President. . . . [Y]ou have the leadership in the Senate, the House, and the party working together." Sen. Paul Coverdell (R., Ga.) thinks that the Democrats' failure to devise a credible alternative position has helped the GOP: "I don't believe the Gephardt message—everything's OK—is selling at all." Norquist thinks a deal with President Clinton is likely, given the similarity between the parties' budget targets. "If Republicans don't fold, they'll win," he says.

The Republicans' discipline reflects their deep and justified fear of the political consequences of botching the issue. These dangers are so great that even as flinty an activist as Mrs. Schlafly frets that the party made "a terrible political mistake" elevating Medicare as an issue: "I think we're going to have to live with most of Medicare. By and large, we're stuck with this socialist program that Lyndon Johnson gave us." Other conservatives are annoyed by the Republicans' endlessly professed desire to "save Medicare." (A rare "off message" remark by a party leader occurred in July, when House Majority Leader Dick Armey called Medicare "a program I would have no part of in a free world.")

But the Right has a big stake in the proposed reforms. Their adoption would move America much closer to a health system where the private sector delivers the services and market forces determine their price. "It's going to be the biggest unraveling of the welfare state we have had in the era since FDR," says Ferrara. "We all ought to be organizing to massively support this." Moffit argues that the proposals would transform American politics: "If conservatives can reform Medicare in this way . . . we can do anything. The sky's the limit." The consequences of a Republican failure would also be substantial. Continued escalation of Medicare costs would leave working families facing crushing payroll taxes. And the budget probably still would not balance. If Medicare goes bankrupt, it won't go alone. □

The Little Engine that Couldn't

STEPHEN MOORE



Alice Mooney

WASHINGTON, D.C.

ON December 21, 1987, the Democrat-controlled Congress wrapped 13 appropriations bills into a $600-billion, 1,400-page omnibus spending bill, dumped it on President Reagan's desk, and then adjourned. Reagan's unhappy options: sign into law the most expensive spending bill in the history of Western civilization or veto it and set in motion a Christmas Eve budget train wreck. In the end, Reagan blinked (thanks to advice from Jim and Howard Baker), the bill was signed, and House Speaker Jim Wright and Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd were exalted. It was perhaps the low point of the Reagan Presidency.

There's a useful, if painful, lesson here for Newt Gingrich and Co. as they prepare to go mano-a-mano with Bill Clinton to decide the fate of the GOP fiscal revolution. Throughout the 1980s, congressional Democrats played fiscal hardball with the White House; they played to win, and invariably did. They routinely used the threat of a budget train wreck as a strategic offensive weapon in policy disputes with Reagan. Most importantly, they almost never blinked first.

Will the Republicans? One thing seems certain about the looming budget fight: if this GOP Congress has anywhere near the fierce loyalty to its agenda of shrinking the government that Jim Wright and the Democratic leadership of the 1980s had to their agenda of expanding it, conservatives will score a resounding victory by early November. The balanced-budget blueprint, the family and economic-growth tax cuts, the dismantling of failed Great Society social programs, the Medicare fix, and the real end to welfare as we know it—every one of these long-sought conservative goals will be achieved in full. As veteran budget analyst Harrison Fox of Citizens for Budget Reform has put it: "All that

Mr. Moore is director of fiscal-policy studies at the Cato Institute.

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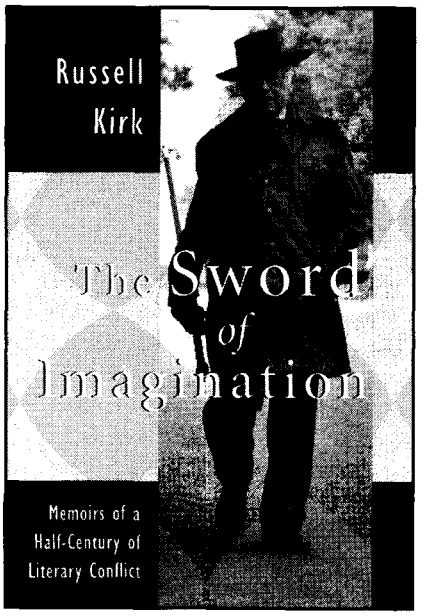

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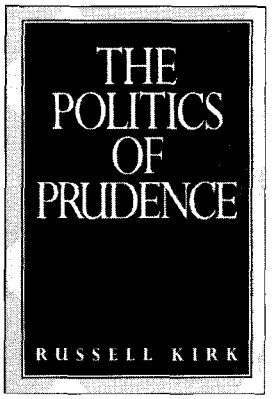

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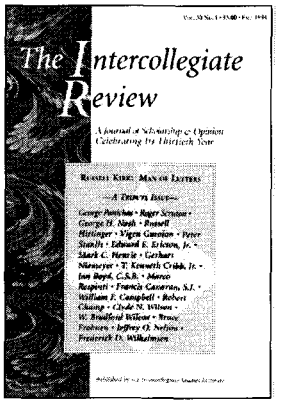

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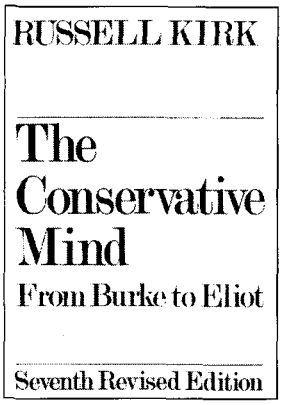

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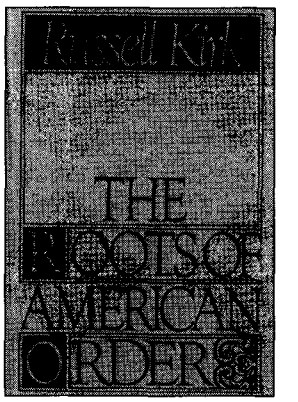

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can prevent total victory is Republicans themselves." However, if Republicans remain unflinchingly committed to the budget revolution that won them 50 House and 8 Senate seats last November, the White House will almost assuredly fold like a cheap dime-store tent. Let's not forget this isn't Clint Eastwood in the Oval Office, it's just Bill Clinton.

EVEN if Clinton vetoes Republican budgets, he still can't conceivably force concessions from a unified Republican House and Senate. Remember, Clinton's beef with Congress is that it's not spending enough money. (We're talking about a GOP budget of $1.6 trillion, more money than is spent by all of the Fortune 500 companies combined. Even if Republicans have their way, spending will still rise by an enormous $350 billion over the next seven years. This is hardly scorched-earth fiscal policy.) Since the Constitution gives only Congress the power to appropriate funds, Clinton can veto Republican balanced budgets till doomsday, but he can't force Republicans to spend a dime more money than they want to. To paraphrase House Appropriations Committee Chairman Livingston: "When you veto a zero, you still get zero."

The real battle looming is not between Republicans and Democrats, but rather between Republicans and Republicans. At stake is the soul of the party in the post-Reagan era. Now we find out who really runs the GOP: conservative visionaries Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey? Or Bob Dole, Bob Packwood, John Chafee, and other centerfield Senate Republicans whose concept of a bold new agenda for America is a slightly less expensive version of the liberal welfare state?

"There are a dozen, maybe two, Senate Republicans who are deathly afraid of a budget train wreck," concedes one Senate leadership staffer. "They are desperate to avoid the politics of gridlock." These are the same GOP senators who have spent the past six months voiding much of the Contract with America. They now want to chop off the legs of House conservatives by plotting a separate peace with Clinton on the budget. Sen. Pete Domenici is already sketching the outlines of a deal with White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta that would balance the budget over 8 or 9 years (rather than 7) and neuter the tax cuts.

Any such negotiated settlement with the White House would be a monumental political and policy blunder. Almost nothing could do more to resuscitate this comatose Presidency and re-establish Bill Clinton's policy "relevance" than this. And any budget that Clinton would willingly agree to is a budget not worth having.

It's not clear why so many Republicans are terrorized by the prospect of a budget train wreck. A train wreck—Washington's metaphor for a fiscal stalemate between the White House and Congress that causes a short-term shutdown of the government—conjures up the image of a kind of mutual assured destruction: everyone loses. In reality the only casualties would be hundreds of liberal spending programs. Under the Anti-Deficiency Act, all "essential federal activities"—the FBI, the military, the courts, the air-traffic-control system, and other agencies that protect Americans from "an imminent threat to life or property"—must remain in full operation if the budget is not approved. Social Security checks would still be sent out. Everything else, though, from the Legal Services Corporation, to the National Endowment for the Arts, to the Department of Education, would grind to a halt. (Sounds as if I died and went to heaven!)

Newt Gingrich was right on target when he explained that the GOP isn't the least bit reluctant to allow Clinton to close down federal operations, because "it's their government, not ours." Clinton's threatening conservative Republicans with the prospect of a government shutdown that would largely defund the agencies of the Left is as if Harry Truman had threatened that if Japan didn't surrender, he would drop the bomb on New York City.

Republicans have been in Washington too long if they believe that Americans would fret over a five- or six-day time out from having to pay taxes for a multitude of nonessential government activities, such as the Small Business Administration, transit subsidies, or Title X sex-education grants. It's no great catastrophe if the public schools have to economize by cutting condom-distribution programs. Former Reagan Administration budget director Jim Miller, who is urging Republicans not to blink first, recently conjured up the ultimate liberal nightmare: "If Clinton shuts down the government, most Americans may not even notice." How many Americans are even aware that there were seven temporary closures of the government between 1981 and 1990?

If Clinton vetoes appropriations bills or the extension of the $5-trillion debt ceiling, Republicans have a rare opportunity to unilaterally impose a de facto balanced budget immediately. Gingrich and Dole could essentially confront Clinton with an ultimatum: until you accept our seven-year balanced budget plan, our tax cuts, and our welfare overhaul, we will suspend any further borrowing this year and prohibit you from spending money on all but the essentials of government. In fact, Nick Smith, Christopher Shays, and 150 other House Republicans have declared unequivocally in a letter to the President and the congressional leadership that they will refuse to raise the statutory ceiling on the debt until "legislation is enacted ensuring a balanced budget by 2002 or sooner."

ENGAGING in a high-stakes budget collision with the White House is unarguably a high-risk political strategy. Senate Republicans worry that voters' attitude will be: A plague on both your houses. But it's of no small consequence that the roles in this year's budget conflict between Capitol Hill and the White House will be reversed from the institutional struggles of the 1980s: this Congress is trying to balance the budget, not bankrupt it. In any face-off with the White House, Gingrich and his allies have the enormous public-relations advantage that they are the ones on the side of the angels. More importantly, the central virtue of a knock-down, drag-out budget fight between congressional Republicans and the White House is that it will help sharply define for 1996 voters the ideological grand canyon between the two parties.

The danger to the GOP majorities in Congress is the growing public perception that Republicans are doing too little, not too much. I became aware of this at a political summit of Perot supporters in Virginia earlier this summer where participants blasted this "do-nothing Congress." One frustrated voter told me that, yes, he realized there is an ideological war over the size and scope of government in Washington. But he asked: "Which side of the war are Republicans on?"

It's a fair question. We'll have the answer in a few weeks. □

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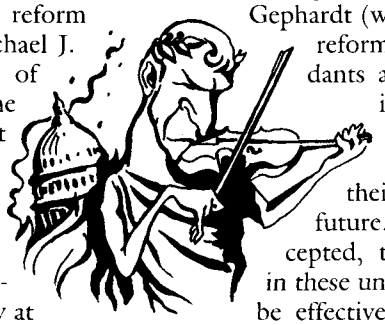
BREAD & CIRCUSES

YOU have to hand it to Senate Republicans. It doesn't seem possible that anyone could take on high-priced trial lawyers in a political fight and lose, but they managed it.

The political fight in question is over tort reform, and the frustration is that a popular conservative reform can find no support. Michael J. Horowitz is a veteran of Washington's wars—he served as President Reagan's first-term OMB General Counsel and also co-chaired his Cabinet Council's working group on legal reform. Now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, he has a plan that delivers on a key plank of the Contract with America; it would cut the income of Bill Clinton's favorite trial-lawyer constituency by 50 per cent and slash auto-insurance premiums by $26 billion. It's intelligent, populist conservatism, and it's even bipartisan. Horowitz's tireless promotion of "Consumer Payoff Tort Reform" has led to endorsements ranging from Robert Bork to former ACLU President Norman Dorsen, from the *Wall Street Journal* to Anthony Lewis. Big-city mayors, consumer groups, and the NFIB all support it. Unfortunately, not enough Republicans in Congress do.



Here's the scandal. Lawyers pocket an estimated 60 cents of every dollar spent in the tort system. Horowitz has two proposals to deliver a far larger share of tort awards to injured parties than to their lawyers. Under the first, the enrichment of lawyers who drag out litigation would be eliminated by encouraging defendants to make early settlement offers. Should an offer be accepted, the plaintiff's lawyer's fee would be limited to capped hourly charges; if rejected, contingency fees could be charged only against recoveries in excess of the offer. Both sides would thus reduce their costs, and lawyers no longer profit out of all proportion to the risk they assume; they would be compensated only for the value they add. "Simple and ingenious," declares Derek Bok, a former dean of the Harvard Law School.

The second proposed reform Horowitz is only too happy to credit to its original 1984 sponsor—Dick Gephardt (who now opposes tort reform). Suppose defendants agree early on to reimburse claimants for all the uninsured economic costs of their claims—past and future. If the offer is accepted, the transaction costs in these undisputed cases would be effectively eliminated; if rejected, plaintiffs would face a higher burden of proof for noneconomic damages (pain and suffering, etc.). The overall effect would be to reduce malpractice, auto, and comparable insurance rates by an estimated 20 to 40 per cent. And because pain and suffering awards are generally figured to be triple the economic damages, the Gephardt plan would sharply reduce the incentive to make innumerable doctor's visits in order to drive awards up. This is not trivial. FBI Director Louis Freeh recently estimated that American households pay over $200 annually in higher health-insurance premiums owing to tort-related health care fraud. And most of the money goes eventually to pay legal fees.

Horowitz would also permit motorists to drop coverage for pain and suffering, thereby cutting their auto insurance rates by a third. According to a Rand Corporation study, California drivers alone could enjoy $3.6 billion annually in premium savings.

Better yet, these reforms split the liberal coalition by clearly favoring injured plaintiffs at the expense not of defendants but of their lawyers. This is a wedge issue—and a sweet one. The tort bar's political contributions helped elect Bill Clinton. And the *quid* for that *quo* was not long in coming: his health-care proposal last year would have permitted lawyers to continue receiving windfall profits from protracted malpractice litigation. If Republicans can now force him to choose—either defend greedy lawyers or enrage his most generous supporters—he will be in a nice fix.

Greedy lawyers were not the target when tort reform was debated inside the Beltway. Last March, Horowitz watched dispiritedly as the tort-reform debate developed into the usual media psychodrama: the Republicans taking rights away from injured consumers by capping damage awards so that their big-business buddies could maim on the cheap while Democrats looked out for the interests of the little guy.

Even so, with the help of some Democratic defections, the House passed both product-liability reform and a broad tort-reform measure covering medical malpractice claims. But the product-liability reform that passed the Senate was more modest, and general tort reform languished altogether there. Now, the expectation is that while both Houses will agree on a product-liability bill of some kind, the present wasteful and costly tort system will remain largely intact—unless there is a new approach that changes the terms of debate.

The basic political problem, Horowitz believes, is that the cap on pain and suffering awards (which the Senate refused to adopt) is too easily caricatured as taking rights away from consumers with no visible payoff. Freshman Senator Fred Thompson of Tennessee said that he couldn't—and wouldn't—explain such a limit to the parents of a severely injured child.

Fortunately, a few Republicans can recognize a good thing when they see one. The Horowitz "early offer" reforms and his auto-insurance "consumer choice" plan (all of which states can opt out of) have been combined in a bill co-sponsored by Senators Mitch McConnell and Spencer Abraham. In the House, Chris Cox and David McIntosh are promoting the same reforms. If they can persuade their colleagues of their merits, every insured American could receive a "litigation tax" break, courtesy of the new Republican majority, before next year's elections.

Bill Clinton would then have a major fight on his hands with the tort bar. If he can't stop tort reform, maybe they'll sue. It's an open-and-shut case of breach of promise. —KATE O'BEIRNE

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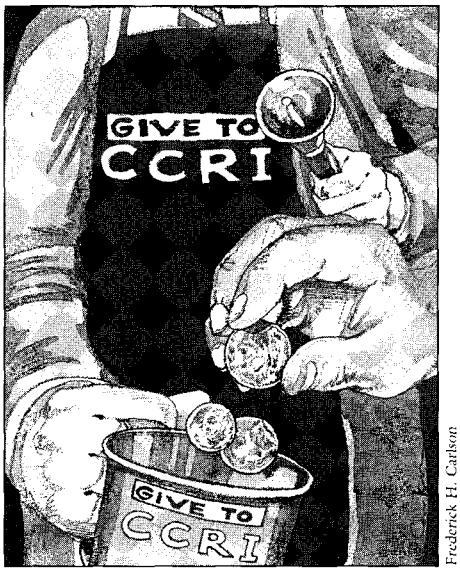
ON THE SCENE

Quota Busting

HAROLD JOHNSON



Frederick H. Carlson

LOS ANGELES

THE caller is from San Antonio, not far from the Alamo, and he wants to reach out and thank Glynn Custred for making a stand for justice, for a cause that might have done Crockett and Bowie proud.

That cause is equal rights, *real* equal rights, the kind Jefferson proclaimed in the Declaration, the kind Martin Luther King Jr. was invoking when he quoted Jefferson.

Glynn Custred is one of the pair of formerly obscure academics who are co-authors of the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI), the ballot proposal to outlaw race and gender preferences in state and local government.

The measure—which bars "discrimination against, or . . . preferential treatment to, any individual" on account of "race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin"—is an almost exact quote from the 1964 Civil Rights Act. No more government hiring by color or chromosome code. No more dividing people by groups rather than treating them as individuals. We *shall* overcome.

Over the past year, as their effort has become the latest Golden State initiative campaign to soar to media stardom, Custred and his colleague, Thomas Wood, have gotten used to calls like the one from San Antonio: Congratulations, gushes the Texas accent. Good work in getting your quota-busting proposal on the ballot. You have done the nation—and all races—a service.

Custred and Wood have also gotten used to setting such callers straight.

Their initiative is *not* on the ballot—not yet. This they want supporters near and far to realize. Before voters get a chance to say yea or nay in November 1996, there is the small formality of collecting one million signatures (the required number of around 700,000, plus a substantial cushion to allow for disqualifications).

Obviously, an undertaking of this scope isn't cheap. There must be volunteer coordination and phone banks and mass mailings and, yes, even paid signature-gatherers.

The rule of thumb in the California initiative game is that you must raise at least $1 for every signature you want to collect. The target for launching CCRI's petition drive is late September. By Labor Day, the campaign had pulled in more than $400,000. So the glass was half full—and half empty.

When you get beyond fundraising challenges, everything else is a go. Support in polls is breathtaking—as high as 2 to 1—and savvy campaigners head things up, led by pollster Arnie Steinberg and Claremont Institute President Larry Arnn.

For CCRI to get before the voters, however—for it to live up to its billing as a political force of nature, a spark for a nationwide rejection of the quota mentality—more of the major conservative donors and politicians who have given it their blessing are going to have to come through with tangible aid as well. Most of the GOP presidential candidates, for instance, have offered encouraging rhetoric. Help in raising cash would be a good way to show they mean it—and to prevent California Gov. Pete Wilson, a newcomer to the cause who is making opposition to quotas a keystone of his presidential campaign, from dominating a powerful issue. Newt Gingrich might also want to stop mulling how best to tackle reverse discrimination, and roll up his sleeves and help CCRI's promoters do it. (They're hopeful that he will eventually do just that.)

Some of the campaign's frustrations are born of its successes. All the publicity has built up an aura of inevitability. Complacency is reinforced by triumphs such as the University of California Regents' throwing out race as an admissions criterion. "People must know this doesn't end anything," says Custred. "The Regents' action will be undone by the university's administrators."

The challenges for the campaign don't stop with money. "The CCRI people shouldn't be surprised if they face dirty tricks from opponents," warns Bob Kiley, who was a consultant for Proposition 187, the measure enacted last year that would bar social services for illegal aliens. A number of Prop. 187 petitions disappeared in the mail, and an FBI agent made an election-eve visit to the home of one campaign leader to ask about rumored plans for a poll-guard effort. "Poll guards aren't illegal," notes Kiley. "This visit was an effort at intimidation by the U.S. Justice Department."

BOB Mulholland, a well-known operative of the California Democratic Party, has already hinted that rough stuff might be in store for CCRI's authors. Mulholland warned in April that he would check to see if Custred and Wood had "paid their taxes, inappropriately touched students, or ever been involved in lawsuits."

"These two professors may have white shirts on now," he said, "but by the time we're done with them, they'll be pretty dirtied up." (No smears have surfaced so far, but 14 months remain until election day.)

A question of strategy also confronts CCRI's managers. "What do they do about the taboos of this issue?" asks Fred Lynch, a Claremont McKenna

Mr. Johnson is an editorial writer at the Orange County Register.

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College professor and author of *Invisible Victims: White Males and the Crisis of Affirmative Action*. "Do they acknowledge white male anger rising from real discrimination? Or do they downplay the issue, and risk not motivating those victims?"

JOE Gelman, CCRI's campaign manager, doesn't hesitate: Anger won't be the currency of the campaign. "This is going to be a positive enterprise that leads with the ethical issue of equality." A recent training session for speakers included people of all hues, and its emphasis was placed on the issue's philosophical, as well as its practical, dimensions. Among CCRI's powerful proponents in the media are some black radio-talk-show hosts, such as Errol Smith and Larry Elder in Los Angeles, who decry the demeaning message for their race that is telegraphed by set-asides.

But viewing the issue in black and white, or brown and white, distorts the kaleidoscope of modern, multiracial California, with more inter-ethnic marriages than any other state, and with its immigrant multitudes. "I asked a city personnel official if newly arrived Iranian-Americans are considered a minority and was told they are considered Caucasian," says Michelle Eun Joo Park-Steel, a member of the Los Angeles Airport Commission. "It seems that traditional designations are no longer appropriate. Moreover, what about my children? I asked how they should apply, considering that their father—my husband—is Caucasian. I was told my Euro-Asian children should claim they are Asian to fit the goals."

Even many liberals see the absurdities. "It's hard in 1995 to justify a system of explicit racial preferences," says Susan Estrich, a Democratic consultant and USC law professor. "We have to recognize that the public mood has changed and that preferences were not intended to be a permanent solution."

The public mood has been prodded by some page-one controversies. At Lowell High in San Francisco, the academic pinnacle of the city's public-school system, high-achieving Asians have been turned away in favor of anointed ethnic groups. In Los Angeles, annoyance about the way chunks of Hollywood Boulevard have collapsed along the path for the city's subway project has been exacerbated by the fact that the contractor won the job over a lower bidder who didn't meet affirmative-action formulae. And not long back the L.A. Fire Department barred 5,000 white men from the firefighter exam explicitly because of their race and sex. (Why do polls show most women supporting CCRI, despite opponents' efforts to paint it as a male-*v.*-female issue? For one thing, many women resent seeing husbands or sons told: White Males Need Not Apply.)

Custred and Wood, political independents for most of their lives, hoped to make their campaign bipartisan, but Democratic chieftains scoffed (the thing's "racist," said Willie Brown, the voluble lead Democrat in the state Assembly and a candidate for mayor of San Francisco). As a result, many GOP activists say the time has arrived to "politicize" the effort—to get the party involved in active money-raising.

Conventional wisdom says having CCRI on the November ballot in a state critical to President Clinton's re-election hopes will be a tremendous plus for the GOP. It will provide a galvanizing "wedge" issue dividing the President and his party hierarchy from many of their own rank-and-file, much as Prop. 187 did last year. Beyond that political advantage for Republicans, there's the not insignificant fact that fighting discrimination, of all kinds, is the right thing to do.

The state GOP has endorsed CCRI, and California Republican Party Chairman John Herrington has sent out a supportive letter. But more could be done, at all levels. One important CCRI backer told me, "Herrington and [National Chairman] Haley Barbour could raise the money this campaign needs by each spending three hours on the phone."

If GOP leaders doubt the wisdom of that advice, they should ponder the grumblings of a Democrat, Charles Geshekter, a professor of African history at California State University, Chico. Last year, Geshekter circulated a petition protesting a plan for race- and sex-based set-asides in campus hiring. Two hundred twenty instructors—40 per cent of Chico's full-time faculty—added their names; 85 per cent of them were registered Democrats. The plan was withdrawn.

Geshekter trembles when he considers his party's fondness for reverse racism and sexism. "The Democratic Party has an incredible death wish," he told the Knight-Ridder News Service. "They're going to be blown to smithereens over this. I think those folks have got to get out more." □

Lurching toward Democracy

BRIAN CROZIER

BUCHAREST AND LONDON

THINGS are stirring in Rumania, that apparently immovable bastion of neo-Communism. Ion Ratiu, the man the Rumanian regime loves to hate, was in London the other day presiding over a ceremony to mark the launching of the Rumanian Cultural Center he has created. Ratiu let it be known that he seriously intends to run for president early next year. Should he win, he would hold a referendum proposing the restoration of the monarchy, for which he believes there would be a popular majority.

The exiled King Michael, born in 1921, has spent most of his life in Britain; when he attempted to visit his country a couple of years ago, he was not allowed to leave the airport and was sent back by the next plane.

Ion Ratiu is well aware of the problems he faces, including his own age: he is 78, though still lucid and vigorous. His courage has never been in doubt. Having been granted political asylum in Britain when Rumania joined the Axis powers in 1940, he was stricken by tuberculosis. During long, recuperative spells in a Swiss sanatorium between November 1946 and January 1950, he wrote a book on the global ambitions of the Soviet Union which remained unpublished until he lent me the typescript in 1986. So struck was I by its prophetic quality that I arranged publication of *Moscow Challenges the World* in December of that year.

Ion Ratiu is still president of the World Union of Free Rumanians, which he created and ran during his

Mr. Crozier, a longtime contributing editor of NR, *is the author most recently of* Free Agent: The Unseen War, 1941–1991 *(HarperCollins).*

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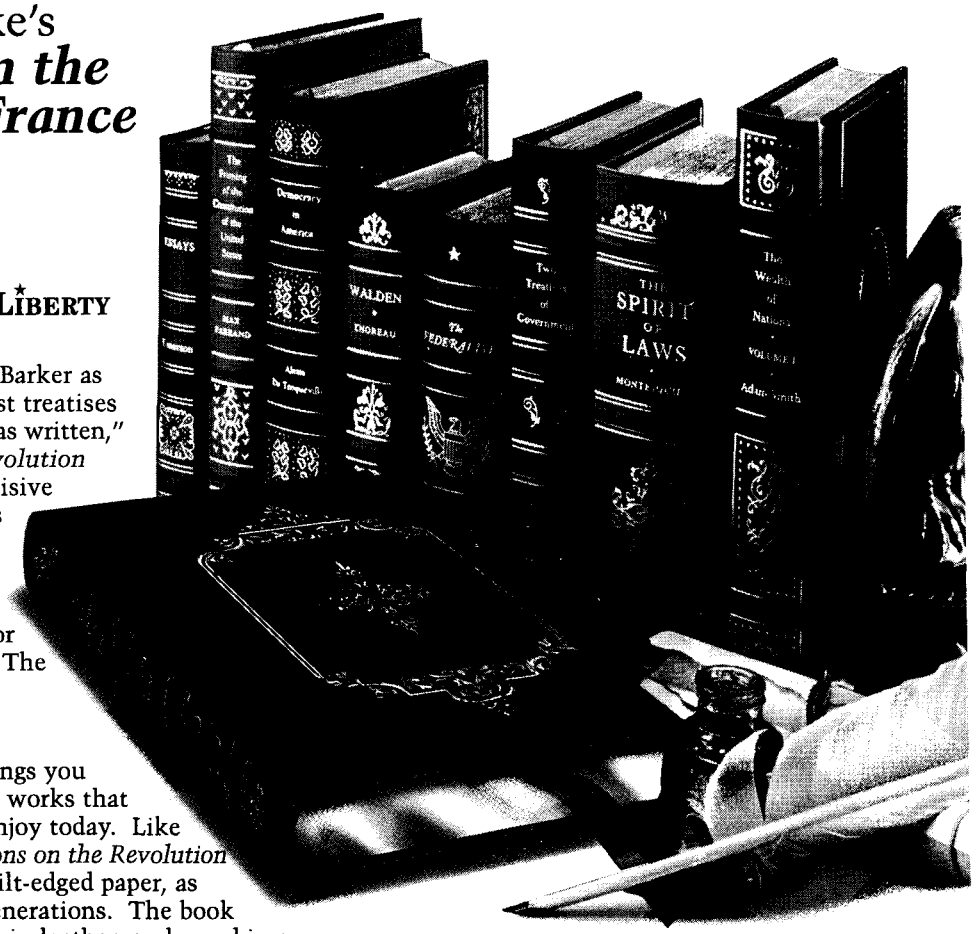

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decades of exile. He is also deputy speaker of the Rumanian Parliament, deputy of Cluj, and vice president of the Rumanian National Peasant Party.

As it happens, the incumbent president of Rumania, Ion Iliescu, has had some unsavory publicity lately. A recent issue of *ZIUA*, a Bucharest daily, gave details of his recruitment as a KGB agent (Code Number D-KGB-90519) during his student days in Moscow. This apparently authentic revelation throws a new (for me a confirmatory) light on the events of December 1989, when the odious tyrant Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown and summarily executed on the orders of Iliescu's faction of the former Communist Party, renamed the "Front of National Salvation." Once a KGB agent, always a KGB agent (unless you defect, and sometimes even then).

The way Iliescu himself put it in an interview was that "the former unique party . . . was self-dissolved" and that the National Salvation Front had emerged "as a spontaneous form of organization of a revolutionary nature." Euphemisms abound in Iliescu's Rumania.

In April, I attended a discreet international conference in Bucharest. Some of the participants, myself among them, had made it clear that we would come to Bucharest only if Ratiu was permitted to attend. He was. In an earlier article ("The New World Disorder," *NR*, Dec. 19, 1994) I described how the post-Ceausescu government had cut off the electricity feeding Ratiu's imported printing press and how persons unknown had burned his apartment to ashes.

On the first evening of the April conference he told me of some of the other problems he had faced, including two thefts. In the first one, in June 1990, a member of his staff removed $160,000 in greenback banknotes, only $70,000 of which was restored after the thief was arrested. In the second, a year later, the amount stolen was $100,000. After another arrest and long litigation the Supreme Court ordered that Ratiu be awarded $60,000 compensation. The official prosecutor immediately appealed against the verdict and the award; but the Special Appeals Court's 35 members unanimously rejected the appeal. (When I last spoke to Ion, the money had not reached him.)

When Ion spoke at the conference, however, he was calm and objective. The facts he gave were not all negative. Despite the earlier cutoff of his electricity, he had been allowed to launch his daily newspaper, named *Cotidianul* (*Daily*). There was no censorship of the press, and he was allowed to attack the government, as were other newspapers. And television? That was another story: apart from a few small, privately owned stations, Rumanian TV is a state monopoly. This means that Ratiu and other opposition members of Parliament are denied regular access to the little box.

Ion Ratiu alleges massive fraud in the first "free" election, in 1990, but believes that the second election, in 1992, was conducted fairly. Moreover, speech is free in Parliament. It certainly came freely from his lips at our conference, even though the neo-Communist government had sent a high-level spokesman to condemn what he was saying as "subjective."

Bonnie T. Gardner

Another plus, or more accurately a reduced minus, that Ratiu cited at our conference: inflation had dropped from 300 to 70 per cent. Against that, more than a million Rumanians had left the country, unemployment was rising, and the old-age pension was barely enough to buy a newspaper. Hence, a family-dependency society.

Most of the land remained in the hands of the state, as did industry, which, as Ratiu put it, is "programed to lose money." And the rate of privatization was the lowest in Eastern Europe.

To counter these observations, the official voice asked what else could have been expected in a country without a banking system; which prompted Ratiu to ask what ever had happened to the $2.5 billion in cash that had been found in the state coffers after the revolution of December 1989. No answer was forthcoming.

That first evening, in Ceausescu's former personal palace, we heard a wide-ranging speech from Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu, who made it clear, as did other official speakers, that Rumania aspires to join NATO and (sometime or another) the European Union. Meanwhile, along with other would-be NATO members, it has to content itself with the feel-good device known as the Partnership for Peace.

Sadly, Rumania is still a long way from becoming a well-functioning democracy or witnessing a full flowering of its potential wealth, bearing in mind that in natural resources (oil, coal, minerals) it is by far the best endowed of the European ex-satellites.

The democratic party scene is a maze of short-lived groups and coalitions. Even the ex-Communists' umbrella, the National Salvation Front, no longer has the field to itself. In late 1990 the Rumanian Communist Party (or at any rate some of its hard-liners) reappeared outside Parliament, as the Social Party of Labor. As for Iliescu's NSF, it acquired another initial two years ago and became the Democratic National Salvation Front or DNSF. The adjective "democratic" is much favored in the ex-satellites.

There is also a new constitution, passed by the Constituent Assembly and ratified by referendum. By old-regime standards, it is a democratic document. For example, whereas under the Communist regime the judiciary was brazenly controlled by the ruling party (as in all other Communist systems), it is now said to be independent and subject only to the law. I note, however, that judges are appointed by the president and are supposedly irremovable (though not in reality, says Ratiu).

The harassment of Ion Ratiu continues. After his speech at the conference, all telephone lines at the offices of his newspaper were cut. On complaining to the authorities, he was told that this was "accidental" because of road work. The cut-off went on for nearly a week.

Against this background, it is hard to see how Ion Ratiu's proposed bid for the presidency could be allowed to succeed in this neo-Communist sham democracy. But such is his courage and determination that one cannot rule out success. □

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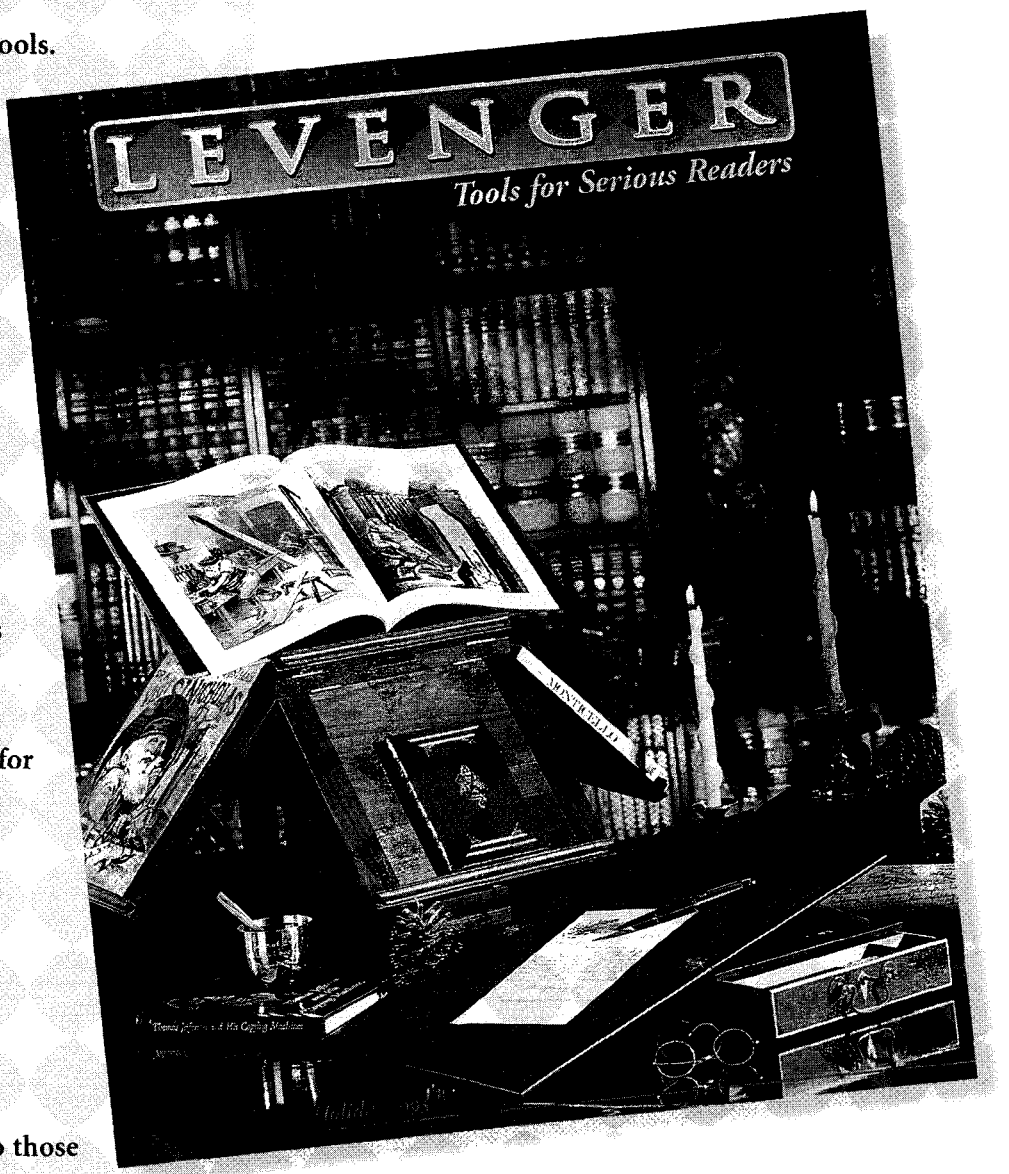

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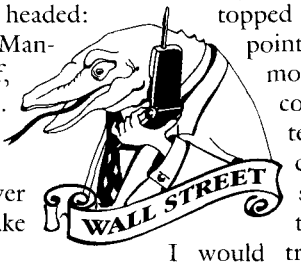
GEKKO

■ I know, I know, going after the *New York Times* again is like kicking a cripple, but I can't help myself. I was reading the August 27 business section when I came across a story headed: "Habits of Highly Effective Managers." What, I asked myself, would Pinch Sulzberger & Co. know about that? But the story was about money managers, and attempted to answer the question, "What does it take to be a superstar manager?"



One of the key characteristics of superstars, it seems, is that "They take the long view and don't speculate on what could happen. None of them use technical analysis, like short-term market movements, because they consider investor behavior irrelevant."

Right. What other investors think is irrelevant. That is, until you want to sell your position.

I have known some of the very best money managers, and let me tell you a little secret: they all do technical analysis—which, to simplify, means they look at charts of stock prices to get a sense of which direction the market for a security or group of securities is going. Of course, you're not supposed to care about the charts, you're supposed to care about the "fundamentals." But that's like saying you buy *Playboy* for the serious articles, not for the centerfold. You need to know investor sentiment, which is what the charts tell you, if only to get a sense of the best timing for a buy or sell decision.

But let's take the *Times* seriously for a moment. Long-term results—where to find them? Ah, Mark Hulbert. *The Hulbert Financial Digest* ranks the results of financial advisors, including newsletter writers and money managers. Over 15 years, the number-two performing advisor/money manager (out of 19 who have a record that long) is Dan Sullivan, who runs the Chartist. As the name suggests, Dan uses technical analysis, and he has turned in a +6.8 per cent annualized return over 15 years, which might satisfy the *Times*. If only its shareholders had done so well.

In fairness, Dan has had a weak year so far, up just 5.3 per cent, mainly because he distrusts the strength of the averages. "The advance/decline line topped out over a year ago," he points out. Too much of the momentum this year was concentrated in the high-tech stocks. I'm mostly in cash, given the risks I see." So he's been the tortoise so far in '95—but I would trust Sullivan's judgment over that of the *Times*.

■ So many of you called in after the last Russian bank crisis, concerned about the risks to the ten-figure dollar net worth of Russia's Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, that I called Moscow to make sure that the little Chernomyrdins wouldn't go hungry. Good news! Imperial Bank, which holds many of the personal accounts of the defender of the interests of the Russian people, was spared any defaults thanks to the intervention of the Central Bank.

There is a problem, though, that the Central Bank can't solve for Chernomyrdin: the successful effort within the Russian government to impose normal taxes on his old home, Gazprom, the Russian gas monopoly. Like those crowds of peasants with torches in the old movies, the Jacobin trash think the shareholders in the richest company in the country should be treated like everyone else. This reckless move will seriously reduce the value of Chernomyrdin's holdings.

"—and you will write 100 times, 'I will not wreak havoc on world currency.' "

But don't worry—even if Chernomyrdin's party, "Our Home Is Russia," should lose the parliamentary elections, as now seems likely, he should be able to eke out a modest pensioner's existence on what he has been able to save out of his salary. The 60 per cent of the Russian people who are below the poverty line haven't shown the entrepreneurial imagination that Chernomyrdin has displayed while holding public office. Forget Red Bone—Hillary should have taken advice from Viktor.

And be warned: Strobe Talbott says he's our friend.

■ Susan Sterne, you'll recall, is my favorite economist. What I look for in the dismal profession is someone who'll get down into the engine room, so to speak, and disassemble those aggregates that you get on the evening news. That's Susan. She's still predicting a negative fourth and first quarter, which, since she agrees with me, makes her a genius.

Susan's specialty is the consumer, and while Wall Street has been wondering why final demand has been disappointing, she has been digging up the data. "Retail has been even weaker than I thought it would be," she says. "The official data seem to be biased toward the better-performing large stores, because when you talk to the factors [high-risk commercial lenders] they say that you're seeing a sales decline of 5 per cent from a year ago for their customers."

The reason for all this weakness is the anemic balance sheet and income statement of the average consumer. "Installment debt as a percentage of personal income is back up to where it was at the previous peak in 1989," Miss Sterne points out. So durable-goods demand is off. All this means that we still need to have another round of inventory liquidation, maybe even deeper than what we've seen in the third quarter. Also, households need to get liquid again. But don't worry too much. We'll probably see six months of economic decline, through the first quarter of '96, but the recovery out of that should be strong, as the central banks around the world pour out the money to buy reelection for the weakest bunch of pols the world has seen for a long time.

—JOHN DIZARD

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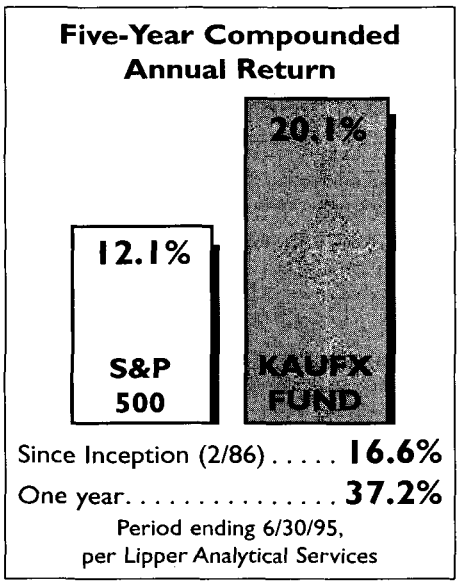

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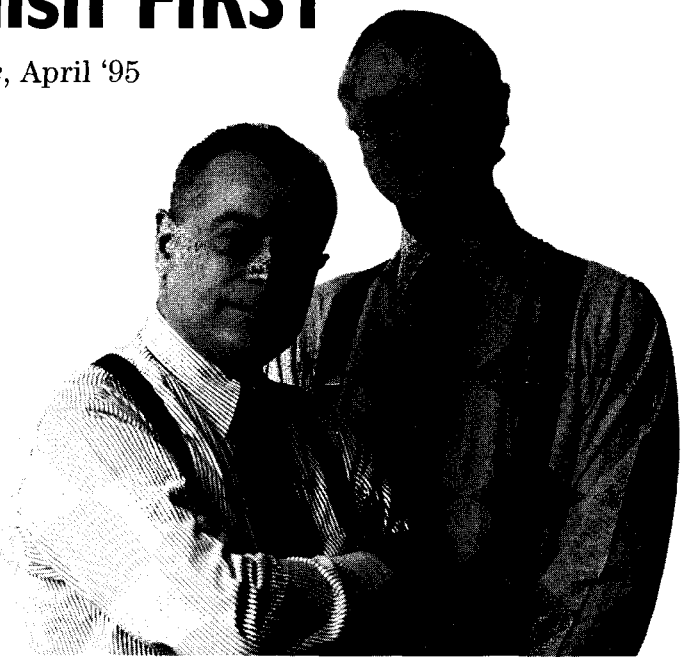

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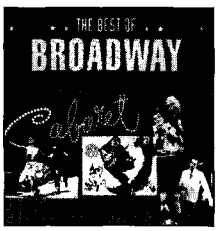

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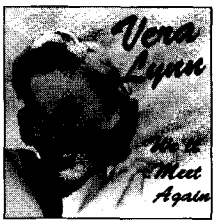

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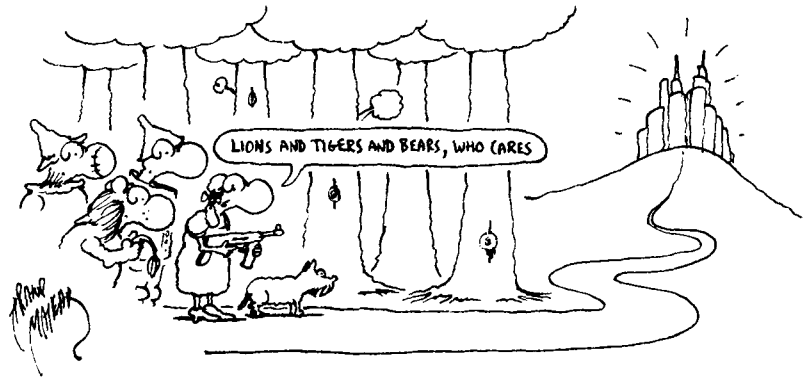

"The Wizard of Uzi."

"Definitely, in a matter this serious I think you should waste no time getting a second opinion."

A Wail at the Whitney

Squiggles and lines, squiggles and lines . . .
What are the portents and where are the signs?
Whose is the head that is shattering? Mine's!

What's their significance, what do they shriek,
All of the paint-pots that tumble and leak?
What are their messages? Which ones will "speak"?

Trying—I'm trying—to read the designs,
Straining toward empathy (various kinds).
Failing, I'm failing, luv. Squiggles and lines.

—Maureen Cannon

"You had to expose religion!
Couldn't you expose something else*?"*

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"AND TODAY, PRESIDENT CLINTON ORDERED AN ATF RAID ON THE PHILIP MORRIS COMPOUND, CHARGING THEM WITH STOCKPILING DANGEROUS ASSAULT TOBACCO AND ENDANGERING CHILDREN. . . ."

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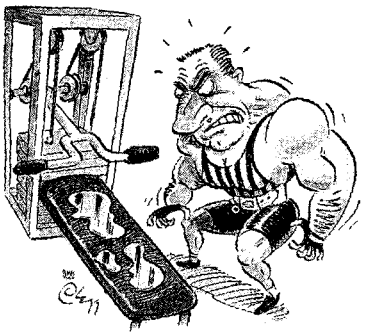
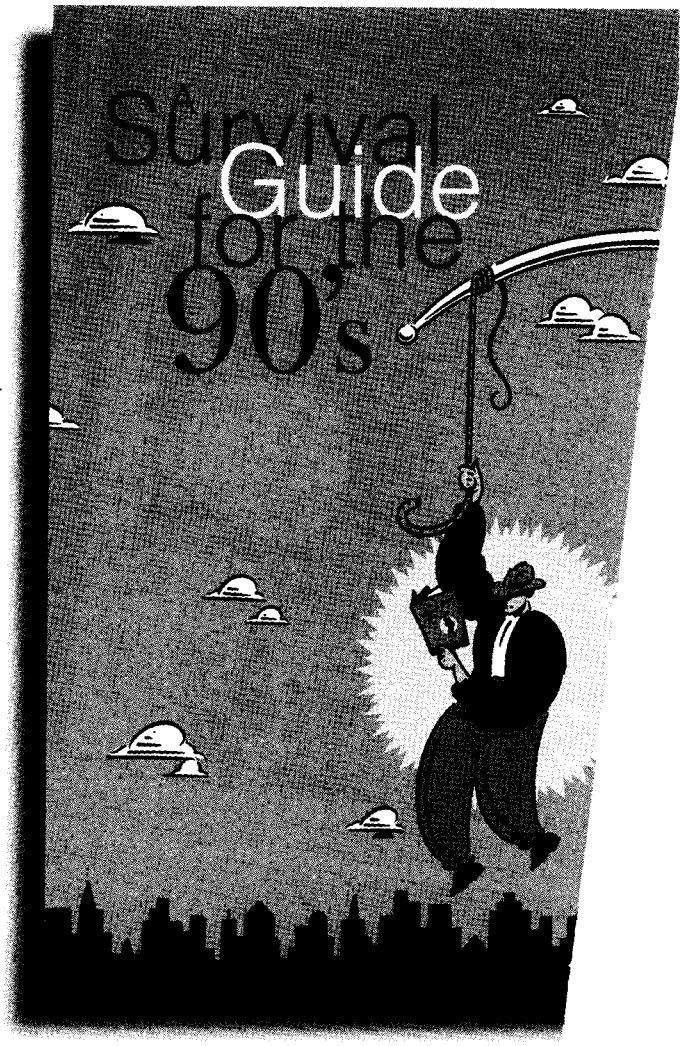


Never leave sweat on gym equipment.
(And if you do, don't say we didn't warn you.)

If you want to light a cigarette at a party, clear it with the host. If somebody's cigarette is bothering you, ask them nicely to blow their smoke in another direction.



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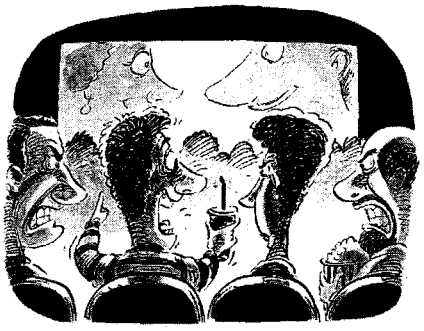
When you're using the ATM, always observe the two minute rule.

Never decide when buying peas, carrots, broccoli, lettuce and mushrooms that since they're all vegetables they only count as one item.



Never come to the conclusion that since you like movies you're actually a film critic and simply must provide a running commentary on the film.

TO LIFE IN THE NINETIES.

is a better solution to many of the issues of our time than more Government intervention in our lives. This book provides solutions to some of life's dilemmas. It suggests that a little old-fashioned common sense can work wonders.

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BACK TO SCHOOL

DUMB AND DUMBER

Alumni to the Rescue

T. KENNETH CRIBB JR.

THE development officer of a reputable Western university recently took one of the school's deans to meet a wealthy alumnus. In the alum's office, the dean spied a bumper sticker that read: "Socialists reject history. Fair enough: History rejects Socialism." Upon leaving, the dean condescendingly remarked that the sticker was annoying, to which the development officer replied: "You have to learn how to talk to these people. This is the future."

"These people" are concerned university alumni, and they represent the best hope for influencing colleges and universities back toward sanity. At schools such as Dartmouth, Princeton, Stanford, Wellesley, Duke, Mount Holyoke, and Yale, alumni groups are demanding the de-politicization of higher learning and better stewardship of donations. According to the *Wellesley News*, in 1994 fewer than 50 per cent of alumnae contributed to Wellesley, for the first time since 1978. Wellesley's alumnae-association director attributes the decrease in part to a demand for accountability. A group of Dartmouth alumni sued the Board of Trustees after rule changes severely limited alumni involvement in decision-making. At South Carolina's Converse College, trustees and alumni forced the president's resignation after a string of multicultural excesses.

Until very recently, the well-documented politicization of colleges and universities went unchecked by alumni. The somnambulance of this core group of university benefactors has allowed college administrators to accede to the political demands of the academic Left without cost. This inattentiveness, however, is ending at a propitious historical moment, a time when universities are facing great financial pressure from reduced government subsidies, resistance to skyrocketing tuition hikes, and the hangover from years of improvident spending. Universities depend to a significant extent on private giving. According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, university trustees, alumni, and private donors provide 49 per cent of the total revenue of American colleges and universities, or nearly $3.4 billion in 1994. With the increasing importance of the marginal dollar should come an opportunity for those seeking authentic university reform.

While alumni slept, radicals who entered the academic world in the Sixties slowly achieved positions of power in faculties and administrations. Along with younger disciples, they redesigned traditional curricula, revamped reading lists and course requirements, instituted speech codes, redefined acceptable behavior outside the classroom, and generally subverted the traditional mission of the university. The end of higher learning was no longer to be the cultivation of the mind but rather, as Richard Weaver observed, "the conditioning [of] the young for political purposes."

This revolution within the university marched on virtually unnoticed by alumni principally because the college public-relations apparatus held a monopoly on the flow of information. Even when the national press picked up on political correctness (years after the fact), alums were lulled by reassurances that at *their* alma mater "nothing had changed."

But the university stranglehold on information began to loosen when in the early 1980s entrepreneurial students, aided by the introduction of desktop-publishing technology and educational institutes willing to contribute money and expertise, established alternative student newspapers at a number of campuses. Coordinated nationally by the Collegiate Network, these papers gave 75 to 100 schools voices independent of university control. To serve the 2,000 campuses that had no such publication, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) launched in 1990 a nationwide alternative student newspaper, *CAMPUS: America's Student Newspaper*, and began informational mailings to tens of thou-

Alphabet: *A set of arbitrary signs which children are still often compelled to learn by rote; usually taught, moreover, in an arbitrary order. For the (equally arbitrary) methods long prescribed in joining these signs, see Spelling.*

Spelling: *A bourgeois pseudo-accomplishment designed to inhibit creativity, self-expression, etc.* *

Mr. Cribb, president of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, was chief of domestic affairs in the Reagan White House.

Selected definitions from "A Short Educational Dictionary," by Kingsley Amis and Robert Conquest, published in Black Paper 3, *1970.*

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sands of targeted alumni donors. As these efforts took hold, alumni started to realize that their alma maters were becoming radicalized laboratories for multicultural experimentation.

The potential for exercising real clout was most recently evidenced by an exposé in an ISI-published student journal at Yale, *Light and Truth*, which broke the story of Yale's refusal to administer as promised $20 million given by alumnus Lee Bass to establish an integrated program in Western civilization. When it became evident to Mr. Bass that he had been kept in the dark while the Yale administration explored ways to divert the money from the agreed-upon program, he asked that Yale refund the $20 million, plus interest. Yale was forced to comply, to the accompaniment of nationwide headlines and the reaction of a donor community infuriated by the sorry treatment of Mr. Bass.

According to reports in both the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe*, much of the opposition to the Bass-funded Western-civilization program was ideological. The *Globe* reported that "Some Yale faculty have resisted the emphasis on Western Civilization, favoring a more multicultural curriculum." The *Times* stated that "Liberals had criticized the restrictions placed on the donation, arguing that the money could be better spent on courses with a multicultural perspective." John Leo noted in *U.S. News & World Report* that the Bass affair is "a reminder of how far the modern university . . . will go these days to avoid hurting the feelings of the campus Left." Meanwhile, Yale's donor community was kept minutely informed by successive mailings of *Light and Truth* and other updates.

"Sir, we've pooled our money and bought the school. Your services are no longer required."

Such shoddy treatment of one of their most prominent confreres led many Yale alumni to ask, in effect, "If Yale values a left-leaning political agenda over $20 million, how will it treat my $1,000, $10,000, or $100,000 gift?"

After subscribing to *Light and Truth*, reform-minded alumni like Yale's Robert T. Eskridge are considering novel ways to redirect their philanthropy. Mr. Eskridge wrote: "We have been shocked when reading the *Light and Truth* publication, and having recently arranged in our wills to leave most of our estates to Yale and my wife's college, Beaver College, we feel now that we would prefer to support an effort . . . to return the education of future generations to its traditional moorings." Yale is out of the will, and the Eskridges have established a trust to promote genuine higher learning.

The cost of Yale's behavior is now estimated to be several times the original

NR'S TOP SCHOOLS

National Review heartily recommends all the schools promoted in this issue. In fact, we've already included many of these schools in the latest edition of ***The National Review College Guide.***

The liberal arts schools featured in the *Guide* merited **National Review**'s (hearty!) recommendation because—after careful research—they passed our strict test: each college has curricular common sense (they respect the tradition of the West), a dedicated teaching staff (faculty are exceptional *and* readily available to students), an administration with a sense of purpose, congenial quality of campus life (the university community is something we feel is outstanding), and supervised student life.

National Review encourages all our student subscribers as well as their parents to call, write, and visit the schools in this issue. Remember, in this day and age of Political Correctness, it's never too early to begin the search for the "right" education!

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Bass gift of $20 million. The principled stand of Lee Bass encouraged many others to join a nationwide alumni movement committed to using its financial muscle to restore the traditional foundations of higher education. Already, alumni have organized for collective action at Stanford (Winds of Freedom), Dartmouth (The Ernest Martin Hopkins Institute), Yale (Light and Truth), Wellesley (Women for Freedom), and Princeton (Princeton Alumni Viewpoints).

In countering the agenda of the academic Left, these and other alumni ef-

Freshman Disorientation

"ORIENTATION is designed to disorient you," announced Stanford professor James Adams to an auditorium of 1,600 puzzled freshmen at the beginning of the new school year. Assembled for one of many orientation-week programs on "diversity," the freshmen soon learned what he meant. A lesbian activist spoke first about "challenging your sexuality," and encouraged the 17- and 18-year-old students to "overcome" their "fears of being queer." Next, a black musician performed an electric-guitar solo as police sirens wailed in the background. He concluded his demonstration by dropping suddenly to the floor and convulsing his body in a re-enactment of the Rodney King beating.

Then it was Professor Adams's turn. Dividing the students by last name, he asked each segment to assume the voice of an animal—G through L, an ape; M through S, a seal; and so on. "Then, on his cue, we made our animal's sound at the top of our lungs," explained a freshman participant in the fall of 1992. As the resulting cacophony of barks, hoots, and whoops filled the auditorium, Professor Adams exulted, "By the time you leave Stanford, you should be completely disoriented."

And Professor Adams is not exaggerating. Life in the PC academy can be discombobulating for students out of step with the latest political fashions, and this is nowhere more true than at Stanford, where former President Donald Kennedy declared that the university's multicultural venture was "a bold experiment that *must* succeed." In almost every area of university life—in the classroom, in the dorm room, and even in the bathroom—"diversity training" continues throughout the year.

In the Classroom: All freshmen must take "Cultures, Ideas, and Values" (CIV), the multi-"track" requirement that replaced Stanford's famous Western Culture course. The theme is deconstruction, with a vengeance: The Bible is still read, for instance, but many professors teach that Genesis is rife with sexism, and some even make St. Paul politically correct by saying that he may have been a homosexual. Shakespeare is also still studied in all the tracks, but *The Tempest* is now viewed from a "slave perspective" and is made to serve as a case study in Western imperialism.

The political motif becomes more explicit in Stanford's mandatory freshman English classes, where students are required to fill out grant proposals for their professors' favorite community-service agencies. Options include homeless-advocacy projects, AIDS support groups, and environmental-action leagues (no Michael Milken defense fund). Freshmen are also enlisted to answer telephones at Stanford's Center for Public Service and make field trips to inner-city East Palo Alto. After all, if there are no Great Books anyway, what is the value of reading and writing?

In the Dorm: Many freshmen will find themselves assigned to "theme" houses, residences in which the staff organize programing around a particular set of political issues. In Stanford's "1960s" theme dorm, the focus is on "the origins of the ecology movement, the women's movement, and gay and lesbian activism." Other dorms organize programing around a racial theme (Ujamaa House for blacks, Casa Zapata for Hispanics, Muhwekma-taw-ruk for American Indians, and Okada for Asians). These dorms primarily have the effect of removing a large number of minority students from the rest of the university. So much for pluralism.

Not surprisingly, racial theme dorms often are rather uncomfortable places for the few students forced to live there who are not members of the preferred group. Several years ago, two freshmen were thrown out of Ujamaa House after they challenged a minority student's assertion that Beethoven was black. (The minority student had read that "fact" in a book in the Ujamaa library.)

A slightly different approach to consciousness-raising came from "Project Awareness," a radical Latino organization. The group staged mock kidnappings all over campus to demonstrate the way citizens supposedly were being abducted by right-wing governments in Latin America. Dressed in camouflage, wearing masks, and brandishing weapons, these student activists would burst into cafeterias to "abduct" students and professors. All was going according to plan, until one night in Wilbur dorm some student diners became convinced that the kidnapping in progress was real. The diners proceeded to beat up the "kidnappers," and Project Awareness came to an abrupt halt.

In the Church: Religiously inclined freshmen may be surprised to find that Bibles have been removed from Stanford's Memorial Church. The church staff has deemed the books exclusionary toward people of other faiths. Meanwhile, the staff has found other ways to keep busy. In October of 1993, for instance, Dean Diana Akiyama presided over the church's first homosexual marriage. Her decision to conduct the "commitment ceremony" ("wedding" is now a disfavored term) was based on her acknowledgment that doing so would be "politically risky, but theologically compelling." While gay marriages are "theologically compelling," apparently, Bibles are not.

In the Bathroom: Freshmen may wish to tread carefully around their "resident assistants" (RAs), upperclass advisors who are particularly devoted to the multiculturalist experiment. RA Marcus Mabry tried to extend diversity training into the dormitory toilets: "I tried soft sells like putting up cartoons of episodes in African-American history in the bathroom stalls, but some people complained, 'I can't escape this multiculturalism stuff anywhere.'" Wonder why?

—DAVID SACKS & PETER THIEL

Mr. Sacks and Mr. Thiel are the authors of The Diversity Myth: "Multiculturalism" and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford, *published by the Independent Institute in Oakland, California, with a foreword by Professor Elizabeth Fox-Genovese.*

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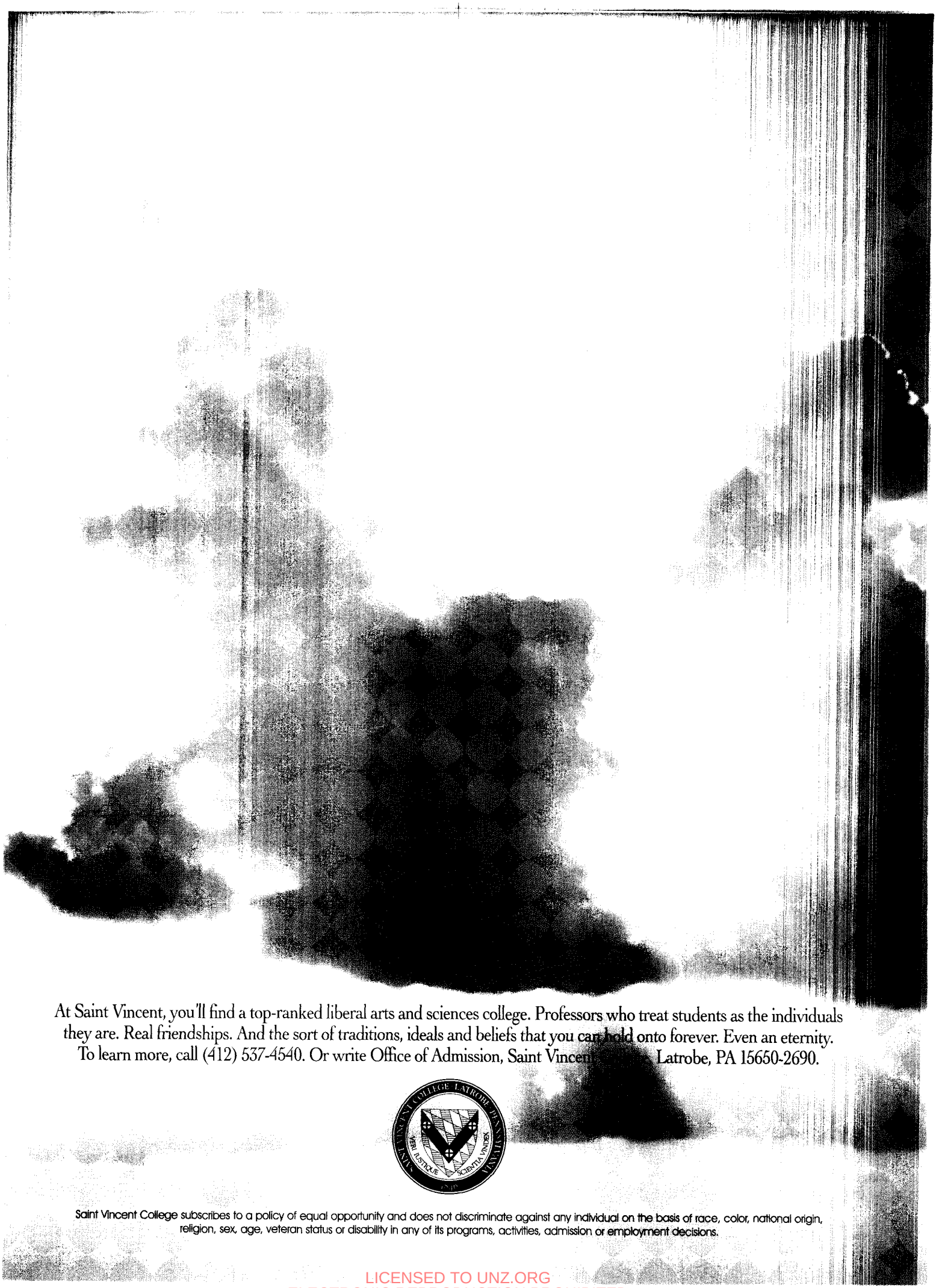

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forts will doubtless be accused of having a conservative agenda of their own. If the impulse toward reform is indeed conservative, it is the noble impulse to conserve the proper ends of an authentically humane education.

From the earliest beginnings of Western culture, the ends of education were those of Plato's Academy: wisdom and virtue. If these ancient ends are to be rescued from the will to power of campus politicians, all of us—students, faculty, trustees, donors, and alumni—need to act with a sense of urgency. As William F. Buckley Jr. stated in his landmark book *God and Man at Yale*, "If the present generation does not check the university's ideological drive, the next generation most probably will not want to." □

New New Math

DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

THE public may be yearning for a return to the basics in public schools, but trend-setting administrators can't get enough of innovations that are self-esteem-intensive and academically forgiving. Today's lesson concerns California's latest math curriculum, the new new math, where memorization is out, and creativity and fun rule the day.

The philosophy behind new new math can be found in an early statement issued by the Instructional Resources Evaluation Panel (IREP), the panel responsible for choosing which math textbooks should be eligible for special state funding: "Early memorization of number facts is seen as a hindrance rather than a help in developing mathematical understanding." (Readers from other states be forewarned: the texts California buys soon sweep the nation.)

The curriculum that the IREP rated highest—a whopping 100 per cent—featured "Dear Family" letters, one of which instructed the parents of third-graders, "Don't worry if your child doesn't use a ruler accurately yet—it's a skill that will develop over time, with more and more opportunities to measure." Some curricula even teach "skip counting" in place of the multiplication tables.

The IREP's color-coded evaluations —orange=bad; blue=good—rated curricula thus:

—Orange/bad: Series features "repetitive exercises."

—Blue/good: Units "begin with a multicultural folktale."

—Orange/bad: "Students are directed to follow prescribed directions."

—Blue/good: Lessons "use students' personal, family, or cultural experiences."

—Orange/bad: Assignments are "expected to produce predetermined numerical results."

—Blue/good: Curriculum requires "student journal writing."

—Orange/bad: Lessons are "generally under the direction of the teacher."

Despite the clear anti-teacher bias, the California Teachers Association and United Teachers/Los Angeles have gone on record supporting the IREP-approved texts.

Even before the new curricula were approved by the state board, state educators had begun inculcating students in the ways of new new math. Last year's controversial California Learning Assessment System (CLAS), for example, gave students credit for wrong answers. This fits with the mantra for the new new math: there is no right answer.

The teacher who headed the team that hatched one CLAS question, and devised the grading system that could award a higher score for a wrong than a right answer, later explained that the equation was "an intentionally ambiguous problem in which no one pattern can be considered the absolute answer."

Here is the politically correct question, which was asked of eighth-graders:

"A forest fire has destroyed 3,000 trees. To prevent erosion, new trees must be planted. Students from your school want to help replant the trees. Each student is given two trees to plant.

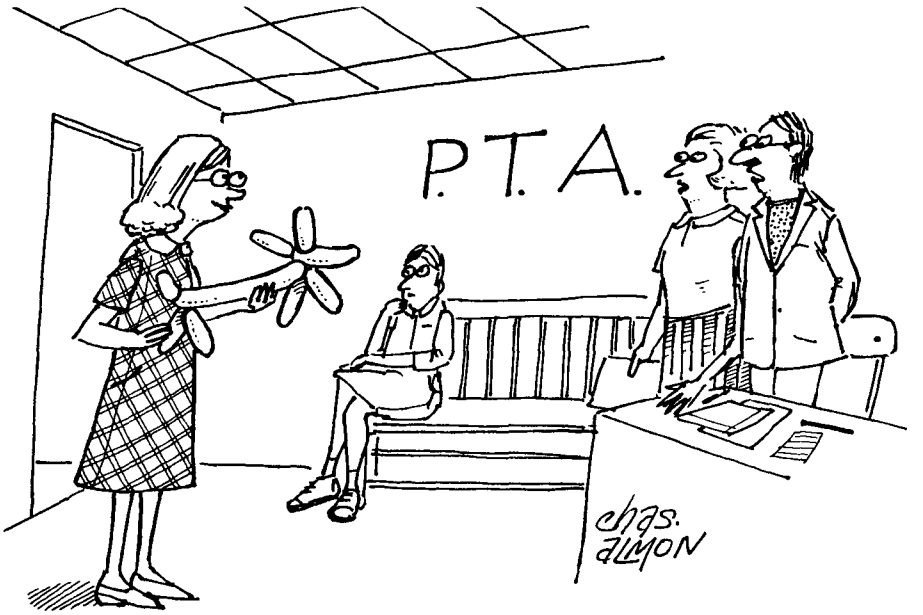
"On the first day of replanting, one student plants both his trees in the forest. On the second day, two students plant their trees. On the third day, four students plant their trees, and so on.

"How many days will it take to replant the the forest on this schedule?

"Explain your plan to the principal so that you can convince her to help students involved in replanting the forest."

The answer, as NATIONAL REVIEW readers can quickly verify, is 10½ or 11 days, depending on whether you round off.

Yet, in accordance with grading guidelines put out by the Department of



"That's very inventive, Mrs. Katz, but the board is still against introducing condoms to grades 1 through 4."

Miss Saunders writes a column, which is syndicated nationally, for the San Francisco Chronicle.

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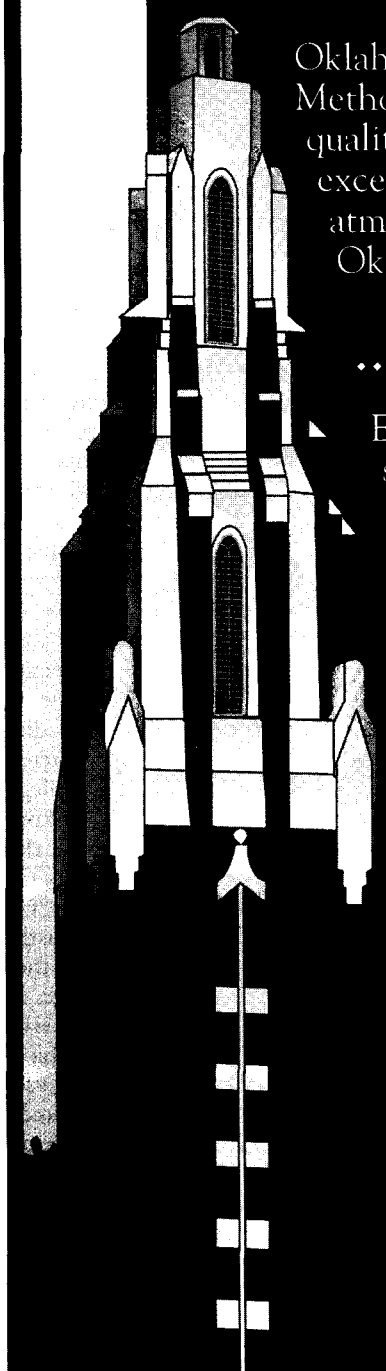

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Education, a student who answered 450 days received a higher grade than a student who answered 10½. You see, the student with the right answer either made some mistakes in his calculations or didn't explain them well enough. He also didn't write a good note to the principal.

The 450-day wonder, on the other hand, wrote an upbeat note. "It would be a great experience and we'd be helping save the forest. Remember only 450 days!" she wrote, ending her note with a happy face.

The new new math's emphasis on writing has given educators a tool in their efforts to hype their innovation. The kids love it, they say. And how do they know? In the Palo Alto Unified School District, teachers know the students love the new approach because they often issue the following assignments: to write essays about the math class that stands out to them, to write letters to their parents about what they've learned in math class, and to write letters to themselves concerning students' math acumen.

Teachers at the Jane Lathrop Middle School compiled a handbook for parents in which they featured actual student assignments. No surprise, students gushed about their classes. There wasn't a single dissenter in the handbook.

One student wrote to Mom and Dad, "I know all the important things that I need to know about being good at math." One student wrote to himself, "Now you are able to turn in an assignment that you feel confident about without having your parents even glance at it because you've learned that if you do make a mistake it's okay because making mistakes means having to fix them which means you [*sic*] going to learn something." He signed off, "Good job." The math class "that stands out" provided a virtual epiphany for another student.

The most frequent and important revelation in the essays is that students realized that other children had found their answers in different ways. Indeed, students wrote that this revelation was "exciting" and "cool." Even students who felt they needed to know more were gosh-darn appreciative of a system that just left them yearning to explore further.

Of course, there is another reason why such essays have become the chosen testimonial for smitten educrats. They don't have to have test scores to back them up. Then again, if kids love writing in math class so much, maybe they'd love to learn algebra in history class. □

Counting Asians

PETER SHAW

EARLIER this summer the University of California at Berkeley released figures on affirmative action that make clear the degree to which Asians, and to a lesser extent whites, are being excluded from that university. Berkeley's estimates of what would happen to white and especially Asian enrollment if affirmative action were done away with are quite conservative. Yet they yield the following indications: Asians would go from 40 per cent to 55 per cent of the student body. Whites would go from 30 per cent to 35 per cent. Hispanics would go from 15 per cent to 5 per cent. Blacks would go from over 6 per cent to under 2 per cent.

Such an outcome makes clear the extent to which Asian-descended students are currently discriminated against. Why, then, did Berkeley reveal the truth?

Because, it would seem, its administration realized that the changes predicted by the university's figures would come as a shock to even the most decided opponents of affirmative action —such as Ward Connerly, the black University of California Regent who had called for an end to affirmative action earlier in the year, provoking the Regents' stormy July meeting. By suddenly telling the truth about how discriminatory the university actually was, the administrators could hope to preserve affirmative action.

Evidently they took their cue from the shocked reactions to estimates similar to theirs in a study done for the Board of Regents. Once that earlier study indicated the results of eliminating affirmative action in admissions, the burden of proof shifted to that system's critics. They became obliged to show how the resultingly low representation of blacks and Hispanics could be defended. Such became the dilemma of Ward Connerly. Two weeks after release of the Berkeley study, the *New York Times* reported that Connerly "now says he sees merit in some cases of preferential treatment for black and Hispanic students." In the event, although the Regents voted to end affirmative action based on sex or race, they inserted an escape clause concerning socioeconomic factors that will surely preserve affirmative action almost as we know it.

But what if the unthinkable did actually take place? What would be the consequences of actually allowing a student population over 50 per cent Asian and under 2 per cent black?

At Berkeley, Stanford, the Ivy League, and other prestigious colleges, the change would amount to a distinct loss of prestige. Why? Just as one of the old measures of prestige was not having too many Jews in attendance, one current measure is not having too many Asians. (Blacks and Hispanics admitted under affirmative action pose no problem, since they can be viewed as charity cases, and the dispensing of charity boosts esteem.) If the prestigious schools were ever in any doubt about the connection between their own standing and the social standing of their student bodies, they had only to consider the counterexample of New York's City College. Thanks to its unfashionable, working-class, largely Jewish student body, that school never could gain prestige. Its students were regularly going on to win Nobel Prizes and to otherwise distinguish themselves in society, yet their successes could not produce prestige.

An unfettered admission of Asians would not make Berkeley as unfashionable as City College of New York used to be. But the place would undoubtedly become academically more like the old City College. The feminist, homosexualist, ethnocentric, and other narrow and politically conceived courses that now make up an important part of the curriculum would hardly be of interest to the Asian majority. To accommodate *them*, departments would have to shift from the intellectually disreputable back to traditional learning. Nor would in-

Mr. Shaw, who died last month, was chairman of the National Association of Scholars.

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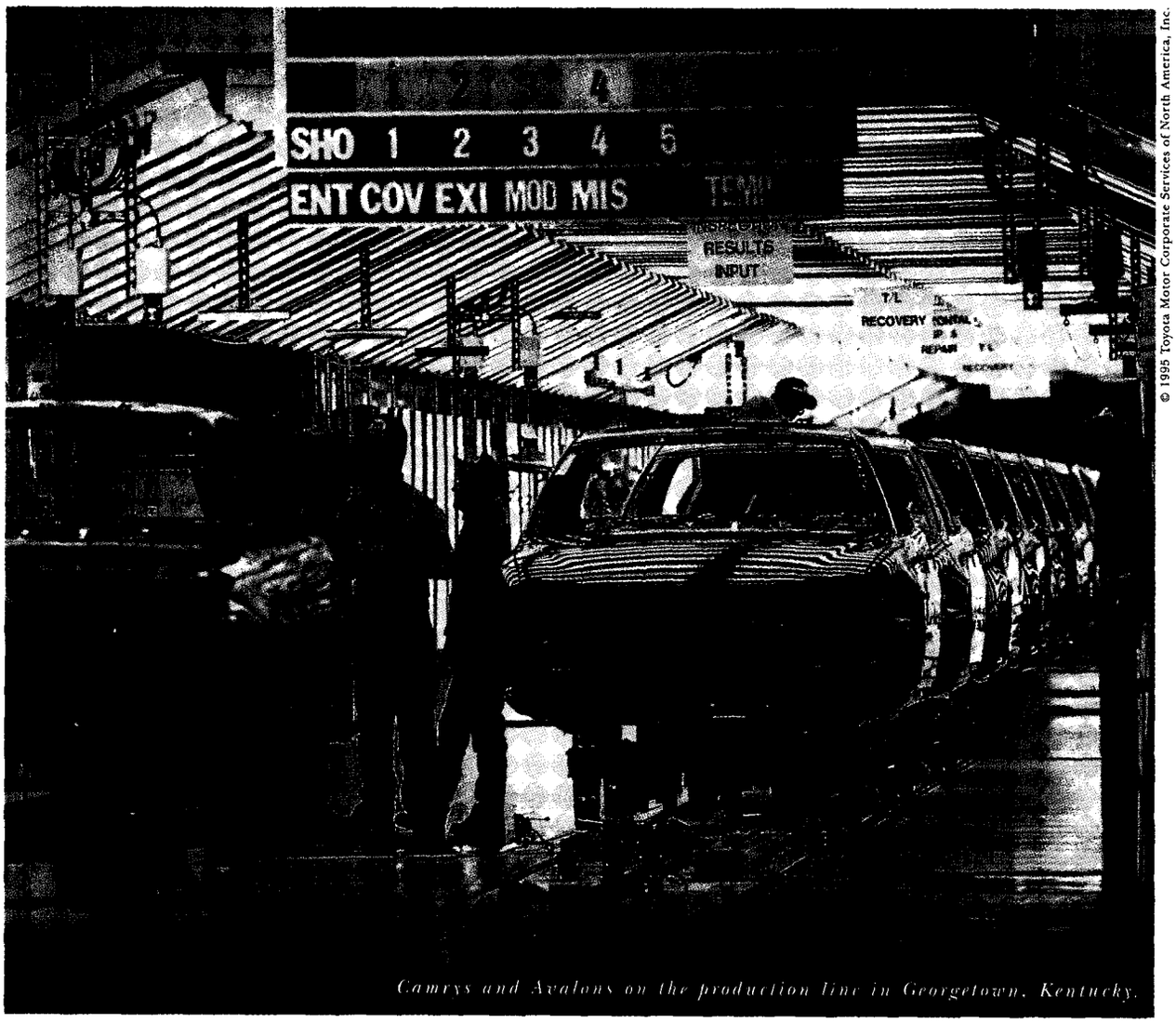

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flated grades any longer prevail, since these students would be strivers wanting objective measures by which they could be seen to have excelled others. Among other things, then, the feared flood of Asians would lead the prestige schools away from some of the intellectually disreputable ways into which they have fallen.

At the same time, other colleges in the nation, most of which have labored to keep up with the worst practices of the day, would also feel free to back off from them. Their resolve would be strengthened, moreover, by having in their student bodies many highly qualified students who could not get into the prestigious schools under the new admissions policy. The best of these students would find places in schools of the second rank. Yet this apparent step down would not constitute a tragedy for these students. After all, the so-called second-rank schools do not lack academic excellence so much as prestige.

Now these colleges would be in a position to compete with their former betters in both areas. First, the influx of better-qualified students would gain them higher intellectual reputations. Second, the influx of socially well-connected students pushed out by the Asians would raise the second-rank schools' quotient of the impalpable, formerly unattainable kind of prestige. There would, in short, take place what might be termed a democratization of prestige.

Black and Hispanic students would also have to shift to (at first) less prestigious schools. Like others forced lower down the collegiate food chain, they would end up at the right level for their academic abilities. Only the highest scorers in their groups would now be at the (former) prestigious schools, while the less-high-scoring would find themselves at schools where the white, Asian, and all other students were at levels comparable to theirs. System-wide, therefore, the current numbers of students from each group would remain constant. No one now capable of being accepted at an institution of higher education in California would be denied a place. The levels of college attendance for blacks and Hispanics would therefore remain the same—that is, about twice as high as their present representation at Berkeley.

Thomas Sowell has shown how students admitted to schools under affirmative action are forced to compete with better-prepared contemporaries. The top schools, by taking in students who cannot compete at that level, leave the next level of schools without students suitable to *them*. Those schools, in turn, take in students who cannot compete there. And so it goes from one level to another of the university system, with blacks and Hispanics who could do well at the level just below them being placed in untenable situations.

***Elitism:** The theory that some people are better at some things than others are. In education, specifically the idea that children of high 'intelligence' who have 'learned' a lot should have a higher claim to further education than those lacking in these qualities.*
***Literate:** See Elitist.*

In the meantime, as the democratization of prestige proceeded, the Asian students would find that the few schools they had concentrated so hard on entering were perhaps not worth either the expense or the striving. They and their parents would suffer some disappointment at having the prestige they had sought snatched away from them by a kind of discrimination less organized than affirmative action but no less real. On the other hand, they would feel more free to choose previously less prestigious schools with special academic strengths or more desirable locations. And so, as they spread themselves more evenly among schools, their so greatly feared domination of a few currently prestigious schools would be diluted.

"My corner's a jungle, Mr. Roberts. . . . I really need to pack heat."

Within each school where they predominated, furthermore, native-born, Asian-descended students, as they gained full possession of the language, would spread out from the sciences and engineering and begin to study history and literature, which have fallen on parlous times, and perhaps bring some improvement to the teaching of these subjects. However, while the Asian-descended students might do well in history and literature and the other humanities, they probably would not be predominant in those fields. These subject areas, thanks to being spared an initial loss of prestige from having too many Asian-descended students, might gain back some of the respectability they have lost.

THE final impact on the Asian-descended students would be more subtle but no less decisive. As a consequence of admissions obstacles being removed, they would experience less difficulty getting into their college of choice—at the same time as they would have a wider choice of acceptable schools. Next, college work would be easier for those of them who had moved into humanities subjects.

At the same time, they and their families would be undergoing the inevitable process of Americanization. Television, popular music, and the need to select sneakers and blue jeans would do their work. As a result of the academic and cultural changes that they would experience, they would lose some of the advantages of disadvantage—just as the Jews whom they currently outscore did before them. Somewhat distracted, and no longer pressingly compelled to strive so hard, they would not excel to the same extent in grades and on tests. Undoubtedly they would remain outstanding students, but they would not represent over 60 per cent of any student body. And as the Asian student population dropped to perhaps 35 per cent—that is, to Berkeley's projected rate for whites under a fair and open system—admission to Berkeley and other currently oversubscribed schools would become easier for all.

In this particular as well as in others the answer to the question of what would happen if Berkeley and other

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schools stopped discriminating against Asians is that all concerned would be likely to benefit. The universities could eliminate the worst of their politicized programs and courses. At a 35 per cent admission rate, white students would enjoy a slight easing of the exclusionary policies now directed against them. Black and Hispanic students would no longer be humiliated by doing less well than others, and so would lose their understandable resentment at being made to seem inadequate.

For Asian-descended students, the results would be mixed. On the one hand, they, too, would no longer be unfairly singled out by discriminatory policies. On the other hand, they would feel the sting of the prejudice operating to reduce the prestige of the schools where they predominated. In sum, they would experience some of the glories and some of the pain of the American immigration experience.

And finally, like the Asians, all students would be exposed to the vagaries of having an unprotected status. The condition is not without its vicissitudes—some harmful, some potentially character-building. Yet the current unhappiness of students under discrimination—whether in their favor or against them—makes at least one thing clear. This is that no better arrangement can ever be brought about either by continued discriminatory legislation, or by hidden practices like Berkeley's exclusion of Asians. □

Bad Schools . . .

JONATHAN LEAF

EVERYONE knows that conditions in urban public schools are bad. In fact, they're much worse than you think. Most people do not believe me when I tell them that I attended a school assembly where a riot took place—and the riot was started by the teachers. Most people do not believe me when I tell them that the schools refuse to allow students to use their books as a study aid before exams. Most people do not believe me when I say that convicted drug dealers are employed as public-school teachers—while serving time in prison.

To start to grasp the problem, suppose yourself a visitor at one of the worst urban public schools, a school like Thomas Jefferson High School in Brooklyn. Probably the first thing you will see in the school is brawling. Brutal fighting and cruelty toward smaller students is a normal part of hallway activity in such schools. You see one boy scurrying from classroom to classroom flipping the lights off and on. Another walks into an empty classroom and undisguisedly tries to jimmy open the other students' lockers.

A guide explains to you that teachers don't wish to become involved. It's not required by their contract, and it's actively discouraged by their union. And, in any event, in a city like New York, teachers don't have any system of detention with which to enforce codes of order. Why should teachers upbraid a student when they have no means of controlling his behavior anyway?

The lack of clear rules of accepted behavior makes teaching those interested in learning impossible, turning pedagogy into a peculiar combination of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and *Romper Room*. Teachers in ghetto public schools are not supposed to teach. They are just supposed to babysit.

Teaching special education, I had boys in my class who would saunter into the classroom, sit down, put on their Walkmen, and rest their heads on the desk, no matter that there were typically only five or six students in their class and no matter that there was another adult caretaker in the room monitoring them. When I would ask them to remove their headphones and take out their books, they would usually respond with swearing and grotesque, sometimes violent, gestures. Nearly twenty minutes of a forty-minute period could be wasted arguing about the logic of coming to class but not working. For a time I wondered about my teaching skills. Then other teachers started congratulating me on my notable success in accomplishing what they could not or would not do—getting the boys to take out their books before the class period was half over.

One might think that where teachers were in physical jeopardy, the teachers' unions would be campaigning for the restoration of discipline and the expulsion of the most belligerent youths. Yet instead, in New York, the teachers' union has called for counseling of troubled students, hazard pay for teachers in the most dangerous schools, increases in the number of security guards, and therapy for victimized teachers.

The rule of the jungle has thus become the law of the school, not only in practice but even in the minds of those ostensibly in charge. In Compton, California, it is now general policy within the school system to allow gang members to pick their high schools so as to avoid rival gang members. Following the public torture by gang members of a 310-pound football player at Javier High School in Compton, the school principal, without expelling any of the perpetrators, instead tried to get them back in line by recruiting a rival and especially feared gang to come in and intimidate them.

THE state of the students is less surprising when one considers the state of many of the teachers—particularly the attitude of young schoolteachers toward books. A remarkably large number of teachers do not read books, do not like them, and do not believe in using them in class. I observed instructors in an elite public school who "taught" classes on such subjects as the Constitution and American Government without having students use any books. I have heard a teacher proudly inform her colleagues that she dressed down children in her class for reading between periods, calling them "squares," and "nerds." I have met a special reading instructor who unabashedly declared that she never assigned homework to her students or pressed them to learn to be better readers. After all, she said, she herself hardly suffered for the fact that she could read only one page of text at a stretch without getting a migraine headache. She did have some concerns about the school. Most of the other teachers there, she explained, did not seem to her to be terribly bright or intellectual.

Mr. Leaf, a public-school teacher, has just completed a book, from which this article is excerpted.

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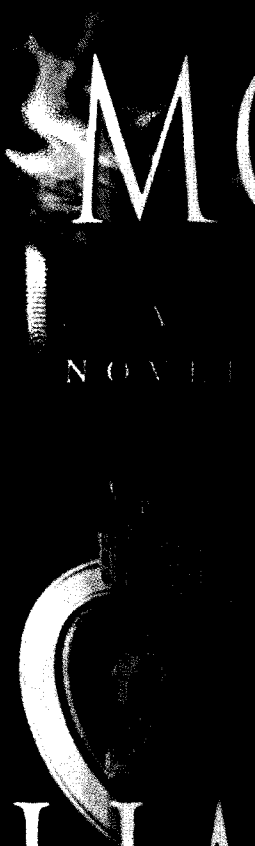

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Not all teachers are like this, of course. Ponder the experiences of Dennis Bates, a young man who became a New York City public-school teacher in 1987. Bates found himself walking into a building that was decayed. He later recalled to Michael Daly, a reporter for the *New York Daily News*, "I heard every curse I knew and some I didn't. There were screams, fights, books being thrown about. Twice I had to duck from text projectiles. I saw hulking students shake down smaller ones for money and cigarettes, while other potential victims hid behind teachers who seemed scared themselves."

After the principal told Bates he would be the children's seventh teacher in two months, the principal returned to a hollering match on the phone and Bates was led up to his classroom. The door had to be unlocked by a student using a credit card. The drawer of Bates's desk "contained broken pens, rodent droppings, and dead roaches fixed in glue. A bell rang and class began."

Bates found he was able to gain some measure of control of the class by telling them he worked nights as a police officer, showing the students a gag picture of himself with a service revolver. But even so, just a tenth of the students followed his direction to write an essay on who they were and what they wished to do with their lives. Bates was desperately anxious to teach them *something* before they graduated a few months thence. So, one day he asked them to write about their favorite weapon. This time he did get responses. Here are three of them (*sic* throughout):

1. "I like the .22s and .25s because you can hid them eazy. And you can hurt somebody bad but not maybe kill them like with a 9MM. I aint lookin to kill just hurt. I hate .38s because they don't hold enough bullets and their a bitch to load."

2. "My favorite weepon. I like Uzi because it powerful and I can take don alots of stupit niggas wid it. When I be chillin on a cort . . . I want a Uzi for Christmas."

3. "My favorite gun is a nine milemeter because its small and it has big bullets and I'm useto it."

What was the reaction of the other teachers? "Bates was stopped in the halls by other teachers. They seemed shocked, though not by the essay's subject.

" 'Everyone wanted to know how I got those kids to write,' Bates says. 'They said: They're doing work for you. How did you do that?' " □

. . . 'Good' Schools

JEN RIPTOES

I TEACH in a Basic Skills Improvement Plan at a lovely, well-maintained suburban elementary school. The students I work with have average or above-average intelligence according to CAT (California Achievement Tests), yet they arrive in a third-grade BSIP class unable to read, write, speak coherent English, or do basic math—addition and subtraction problems with carrying and borrowing.

Out of curiosity, I took a look at how their classrooms functioned for first and second grades, then went into shock. I had assumed that what went on in a classroom was at least somewhat similar to what had gone on when I was in primary grade school.

What do you expect to find in a first-grade classroom? What do you believe *should* be going on in the morning hours before a young child tires and gets hungry?

The typical first-grade class is strolling about the classroom to look over "centers." A center is a section of a classroom set apart by partitions, book cases, or carpeting. Centers are geared up for each child to explore, experiment, and discover. There is, as a rule, no adult present who is equipped to provide proper vocabulary or direction for the exploration or discovery.

Now, are we ready to watch our young children explore their way through the 3 Rs? The teacher is trying to organize a reading group on the carpet "center." The children are lying on the floor with their books; several of them are wearing their books on top of their heads. Teacher has a book too. Everyone reads along as Teacher reads the words, and reads the words, and reads the words. Then a little person reads the same words, and the next little person reads the same words, and the next little person reads the same words. All the little people read the same words. These words now go on a word ring. The ring will go home, and *voilà*! every little person knows the same words. Reading is done for the day. Let's go on to math—get out the beans, the sticks, the giant Lego blocks that have replaced math texts and workbooks. Let's play math.

I AM not making up these classroom activities. They are real. Reading is part of Whole Language Development, math is part of Living Skills, and writing is done through Journals. Journals. Here is the sum total of first- and second-grade education demonstrated, or illustrated. Each day the students transcribe their memorable activities in a journal. Innovative spelling minus any organized program that would teach handwriting results in absolute gibberish; therefore, pictures are accepted instead.

The picture of education does not get any better as you move up to the next grade. The classrooms continue to have centers and carpeted areas for reading on the floor. What you do seem to see, however, is more diligence to nonsense.

Third grade is where Developmental Education is supposed to end. This is where everyone is supposed to be ready to do structured reading, structured writing, and structured math with real applications. If this is supposed to happen, then where are the textbooks? There is no Basal Reader or workbook, there are no language or spelling books or handwriting books; there are math texts that are unreadable, with no more than seven or eight problems per page, and there are bean counters, sticks, blocks, and the new toy calculators.

The third-grade students are still doing their reading on the carpet—Teacher reading the words, students following along, one chapter at a time. Students cannot read ahead to get to the end of a story because the books are collected and put away. So it goes on—word by word, sentence by sentence. (And where does it end? Take a quick peek at a "low" seventh-grade reading class. The students are following along

Mrs. Riptoes is an elementary-school teacher.

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in their novel—word by word—as they listen to it read on a tape recorder.)

Parents start to notice that their child, aged seven or eight, cannot read. Why can't their child read? Read? Read? These parents are met with a chorus of teachers or administrators responding, "Your child is just not developmentally ready," or "Your child may be perceptually or neurologically impaired. We really cannot tell yet, because we do not give any standardized tests to K, first-, or second-graders. We really won't know how your child is doing until the end of second grade when we administer CAT tests. Trust us. We are the professionals. We know what is best for your child. Trust us! Trust us! Trust us!"

This is reality in the suburbs. This is what is foisted on a trusting populace. This is what is foisted on the dwindling number of teachers who are leftovers from a time when the word education meant *education*.

Classroom teachers no longer have the freedom to teach. They are closely monitored, examined, and graded. Excellence is out. Conformity is in. All subject material comes out of a box—lesson by numbered lesson, game piece by game piece, ditto by ditto. No variations accepted.

Personally I am grateful to be not a classroom teacher but a BSIP teacher. My job is to live up to what BSIP stands for: Basic Skills Improvement Plan. I plan to improve the education of each individual child who comes into this program.

It is a very difficult age in which to teach. It is difficult to motivate young children who have become bored, who have failed, and who feel stupid. How can we get these children motivated? The learning can still happen, but it has to be disguised and apologized for. Old-fashioned, very traditional modes of education plus modern technology can overcome a great deal of earlier mishandling. In the chart following, there is an indication of what can be accomplished—but the methods and materials were all clandestine.

Clandestine teaching involves all the no-no things that modern educators feel inhibit children, take away their creativity, their self-expression. Clandestine teaching is vocabulary, correct spelling, use of dictionaries and a thesaurus, rote oral methods for multiplication tables, memorization of poetry, repetitive drills for capitalization and punctuation, and major use of phonics for syllabication (breaking words into small syllables). It involves the use of old-fashioned, out-of-print phonics books, stories that have a moral lesson (e.g., Aesop's "The Fox and the Grapes"), handwriting books, books of maps and graphs, math books that have a systematic approach to learning one skill at a time. Clandestine teaching is working in a room shared by four other teachers and hoping no one is too curious about the repetitive sound of third-grade children learning a times table.

	September 1992		June 1993	
	Student	Score	Score	IQ
Math	J	29	60	114
	T	22	51	113
	M	17	81	101
	M	15	39	89
	Y	18	52	96
Language	J	30	44	104
Reading	B	35	61	117
	K	21	47	109
	A	26	68	108
	September 1993		June 1994	
	Student	Score	Score	IQ
Math	T	34	86	119
	J	34	66	106
	J	31	80	89
Language	J	24	90	106
	A	27	63	121
Reading	A	27	88	121
	M	34	77	82
	J	24	53	106
	N	31	67	107

None of the materials or methods were ever demonstrated in front of a supervisor—they could not be—but the results were astounding. Of the 39 children in BSIP last year, only one third-grade student went to the fourth grade still in the program—and that child's score had doubled. One of my BSIP girls went on to win the highest math achievement awards in the fourth grade.

Is there hope for public education? Only if parents reclaim their role as overseers of their local school. Only if parents tell the "professionals" that they had better produce, or be professionals someplace else. Only if teachers who still remember how to teach have the courage to do so. Courage. Is there any of that still out there? □

Education Versus The American Way

JAMES L. PAYNE

ONCE, when people worried about censorship, they really had something serious on their minds. For example, in Zurich during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 74 writers were executed for saying the wrong thing about marriage and religion. When English journalist John Stubbs published a pamphlet that Queen Elizabeth I didn't like, she had the executioner cut off his right hand.

So it's no surprise that reports of the re-emergence of censorship have generated concern. *Publishers Weekly* has warned that America faces "new risks of censorship." A panelist at a censorship meeting of the American Booksellers Convention maintained that "We are currently at an epidemic stage." *New York Times* columnist Anna Quindlen informed readers of an authoritative "four-page list in very small type describing just some of the books challenged or banned last year."

What's really going on here?

Let's begin with a closer look at the "censorship" claims. The organization that has been most energetic in spreading these allegations is People for the American Way. Founded in 1980 by TV producer Norman Lear, this group began as a rather out-of-focus liberal lobby that didn't know exactly what it was for, but knew it was against conservatives, especially religious ones. PAW compiles an "annual survey of censor-

Mr. Payne is director of Lytton Research and Analysis in Sandpoint, Idaho. His recent books include The Culture of Spending *and* Costly Returns: The Burdens of the U.S. Tax System.

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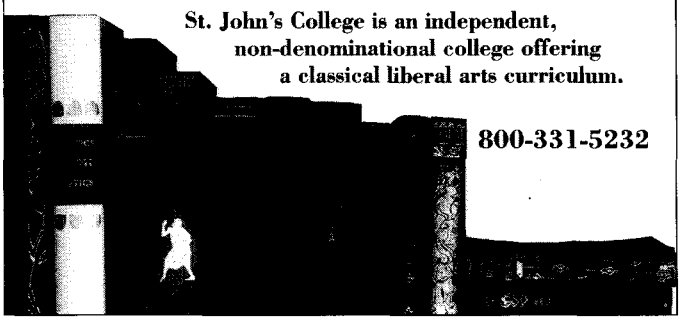

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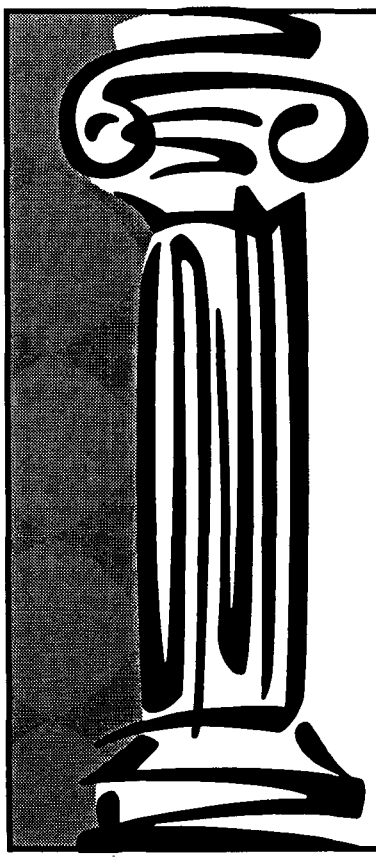

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ship," which details challenges to books and curricula in the public schools. Its 1993–94 report, *Attacks on the Freedom to Learn,* finds 375 incidents of "attempted censorship," the highest number ever. Frightening—until you look at the actual cases.

For example, in Frederick, Maryland, a parent objected to use of the book *Our Endangered Planet: Tropical Rain Forests* in the elementary-school curriculum on the grounds that it was "one-sided." The superintendent of schools rejected the parent's complaint and the book was retained for classroom use. Are you scared yet?

Let's try another case, from Columbia, Maryland. A parent objected to *Hot Rod* magazine in elementary-school libraries, because of its alcohol, cigarette, and chewing-tobacco ads, and photos that exploit women. A committee considered the complaint and voted 9 to 2 to retain the magazine; an associate superintendent upheld the committee and so notified the objector.

THESE modern cases are so markedly undreadful that it's hard to see how PAW squeezes out the connection with censorship. Censorship, after all, is using the force of the state to suppress publications and to punish those who produce and sell them. In all its years of looking into every nook and cranny for outrages, PAW has been unable to find even a single case of genuine attempted censorship, a case where someone advocated that government should restrict anyone's freedom to write, publish, sell, or read a certain work.

In fact, the modern cases are almost the opposite of censorship. In the real censorship of the bad old days, government officials acted against private individuals. In these modern cases, the roles are reversed: citizens are trying to act against government officials. *Hot Rod* was purchased by a government employee—a public-school librarian—with taxpayers' money. Objecting to its purchase is nothing more than ordinary political protest, just like objecting to government's purchase of a B-1 bomber or a dam on the Snake River.

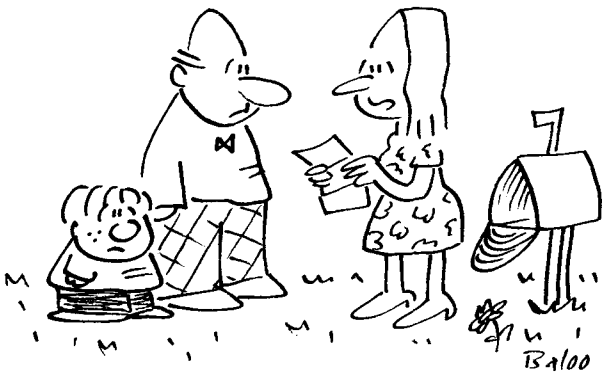
Whatever the confusion of aims in its early days, PAW finally has a focus: defending government employees and government programs. In battles between citizens and government employees, the organization's position is simple: the teachers and librarians who make the decisions are right, and those who question them are wrong.

From the standpoint of democratic theory, the growing number of challenges to curriculum and texts in the public schools is not to be deplored. It is a sign of a healthy democracy at work, glowing proof that taxation with representation is thriving.

> ***Teach:*** *Impose irrelevant facts and bourgeois indoctrination upon.*
> ***Lazy*** *(obs.): Divisive bourgeois label for those with a low motivation to accept 'teaching' (q.v.).*

Officials at the organizations representing government teachers are curiously unable to accommodate this idea. When I asked the research director of PAW if parents had a constitutional right to question book selection in public schools, he agreed they did. But wouldn't that give us, in PAW's terminology, a constitutional right to "censorship"? How could a deplorable practice—censorship—be endorsed by the U.S. Constitution? He fumbled. "People have a constitutional right to do it. We just don't think it's appropriate."

Interestingly, in their efforts to uphold government teachers, organizations like People for the American Way have got hold of a critical truth: *Political supervision of schools is hard on teachers.* Indeed, it is so hard on teachers that it tends to be fatal to the cause of good education.



"It's a subpoena from the PTA."

One of the great fallacies of state social engineering is the idea that government employees are neutral, impersonal agents: they will do anything we tell them to. Real employees, as it happens, are not like this. They have ideas and convictions of their own, and they want to do things their way. External directives lead to resistance, poor morale, and, ultimately, a low level of real accomplishment.

The point especially applies to teaching. Successful teaching requires staff who are committed and motivated. Enthusiasm comes from giving teachers freedom to choose topics, materials, and approaches. As outsiders try to control and direct teachers, saying what they must and mustn't teach, what books they can and can't assign, they sap their energy and morale. This micromanaging tends to drive talented teachers away from the public schools, and leads to cynicism and burnout among those who remain.

Consider the following episode, typical of what is happening in public schools around America. In Southampton, New York, middle-schoolers had been rehearsing a musical production of *Peter Pan* for six weeks when members of the Shinnecock tribe protested that the song "Ugg-a-Wugg" and the use of the words "squaw" and "redskin" were offensive to Native Americans. The words couldn't be changed without causing a copyright violation, so the entire production was canceled.

The case is a fine example of pluralistic democracy at work. Because in the theory of democracy everyone has a right to his opinion—and the right to use pressure-group tactics to get government to impose his opinion on others, however foolish it may be—democrats can only approve of whatever wire-pulling the Shinnecock tribe employed. Educators, on the other hand, justifiably gnash their teeth. The cancelation of the musical is bound to be a blow to morale in the school. It says, in effect, that drama teachers do not have the freedom to select plays that they and their students are enthusiastic about. They are limited to dull, politically correct material that satisfies meddling politicians. Talented, spirited teachers will not be content with such constraints.

Perhaps the democratic answer to a democratic problem is coun-

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ter-lobbying. Couldn't upholders of *Peter Pan* have mounted a bigger, noisier political campaign and and defeated the Indians? Maybe. But, alas, this remedy is worse than the disease. Open battles over curricular materials are time-consuming and stressful; even when teachers win, the tension and bad feeling undermine morale for years to come.

A GOOD illustration of the destructiveness of a wide-open political battle comes from Bay County, Florida. In 1985, Mowat Junior High School had a model innovative English program. The school was the only junior high in Florida to be designated a Center of Excellence by the National Council of Teachers of English; the reading scores of its students were two grade levels higher than the scores of students in other junior high schools in the county.

A grandmother of one student objected to one book used in the program—*I Am the Cheese*—because of its vulgar language and sexual references. The county superintendent ordered the book dropped from the program. The teachers, high-spirited and committed, decided to fight. They ignored the superintendent and continued to use the book. The mother of the child lodged a formal complaint against the book, and the battle was on.

A school review committee found in favor of the book, but was overturned by the school board; the child's grandfather sent a letter to parents of all the students in the program complaining of the book's "obscene language," and also gave a newspaper interview decrying the English program's use of "these filthy little books"; the teachers at the Mowat school organized a campaign supporting the English program; the school board adopted a complex, five-step procedure for accepting books; the teachers objected; stormy school-board meetings ensued; dozens more books were excluded from usage; the teachers filed suit in federal court against the school board.

After three years, court proceedings finally wound their way to a negotiated settlement. The result was a complex bureaucratic book-selection process that involved hearings, reviews, and appeals. One of the many burdens laid on the teachers as an outgrowth of the controversy was the requirement that they submit a complete written justification for every book in their classroom, including books informally available for optional student reading. For each book—and some classrooms had hundreds—teachers had to summarize the plot, explain its value, and detail how it would be presented.

From the standpoint of democracy, the Bay County book dispute was a magnificent display of citizen involvement. Educationally, it was a disaster. The teachers hated being drawn into a protracted public struggle, and they chafed against the ponderous, bureaucratic directives imposed by their superiors, the democratically elected representatives of the community. Eventually, all 11 of the English teachers at Mowat left, and the program lost its designation as a Center of Excellence.

As another example, look at what has happened with public-school textbooks. Decades of political controversy have resulted in an incredibly ponderous approval process. Today textbooks are composed by a sequence of committees and boards, each of which inserts and deletes according to its taste in political correctness. The process begins with state laws and regulations that set out guidelines for content. Then state Departments of Education check the books for compliance, and conduct "social content" reviews. Then public hearings are held in which pressure groups—left, right, and center—plead for changes favorable to their causes. Eventually the relevant state board orders publishers to make changes—hundreds and hundreds of them—to steer around scientific, social, religious, and political controversies, or to impose the ideology of the faction that happens to be dominant in the rewriting.

The most deplorable aspect of this process is the degree to which participants have accepted it. The system is a caricature of the worst imaginable book-writing method, a system bound to produce works lacking coherence and enthusiasm. Yet members of the public-education establishment calmly accept it. They understand that if you are going to have tax-funded education, this is the kind of monstrosity one has to live with.

Public education in the United States has been living on borrowed time. It can work well only in a pseudo-democracy or a pre-democracy where citizens are reluctant to exercise their right to protest government decisions. It relies on citizens being servile and deferential. As more parents and taxpayers begin to feel their democratic oats—and become empowered in their children's education—the number of these disputes will multiply, burdening schools with more acrimonious debate, more red tape, micromanaging, and litigation.

Whether we like it or not, tax-funded education is losing its viability. Its real enemy is not any particular pressure group or ideological faction. The public schools are being driven toward extinction by the flowering of democracy itself. □

Teacher Knows Best

DANIEL MCGROARTY

MILWAUKEE, site of the nation's first publicly funded private-school voucher program (and the only such program until Cleveland's kicks off in the 1996–97 school year), has once again thrust itself into the voucher vanguard. Beginning this fall, its path-breaking Parental Choice Program expands to include low-income children wishing to attend Milwaukee's religious schools.

To date, 102 religious schools have notified the state of their intent to participate—welcoming voucher students in a phased process that will open eligibility to 7,250 Milwaukee children immediately, and 15,700 for 1996–97. The program retains its means test for eligibility: participating families may earn no more than the eligibility level for reduced-price lunches.

To no one's surprise, Wisconsin's public-education establishment brought out the brass knuckles. The Wisconsin Education Association Council—the state's 55,000-member NEA affiliate—

Mr. McGroarty, Senior Fellow with the Institute for Contemporary Studies, is the author of Break These Chains, *a book on private-school choice forthcoming from ICS Press.*

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threatened to mount an effort to unionize private-school teachers: a telling if tacit threat to introduce into private schools the flesh-eating virus that has rendered reform all but impossible in public schools. But the unions sensed the tide of public opinion turning against them. An internal memo headlined "LEGISLATIVE ALERT," which requested members to phone state legislators to protest vouchers, comes with the following admonition: "*Do not state that you are a teacher. This will not help your cause. Have husbands, wives, sisters, brothers, and voting-age children call also.*"

Teachers'-union leaders also hinted broadly at a boycott aimed at Milwaukee business leaders who supported expanding private-school choice. But evidence suggests a very different sort of boycott is already in effect: one staged by Milwaukee Public School (MPS) teachers who prefer a private education for their own children.

An April 1995 survey by the University of Wisconsin/Madison's Applied Population Laboratory, re-commissioned as part of this writer's research, documents the extent to which Milwaukee Public School teachers send their own children anywhere but MPS schools. Using data from the Public Use Micro-Sample of the 1990 U.S. Census, the survey found that 31.4 per cent of all MPS teachers—who are required by condition of employment to live within city limits—enroll their own children in private schools. That's nearly three times the national average.

The tendency grows more pronounced for public-school teachers who reside in Milwaukee's Central City neighborhoods, home to some of the public system's worst schools. In the two "Central City" census areas, the percentage of public-school teachers enrolling their children in private schools swells to 42.1 and 44.5 per cent—a resounding "no confidence" vote in urban public education by the people who know it best.

With so many of the rank-and-file shielding their own children from the public-school experience, it can be difficult to find a leadership that hasn't also felt the pull of private schooling. In this year's race for Milwaukee School Board, Robert Kurth, the candidate of the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association, scored a perfect 10 on the teachers'-union questionnaire. Kurth pronounced privatization "a scam and a sham," and

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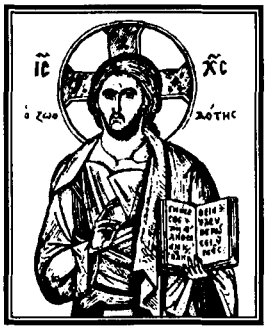

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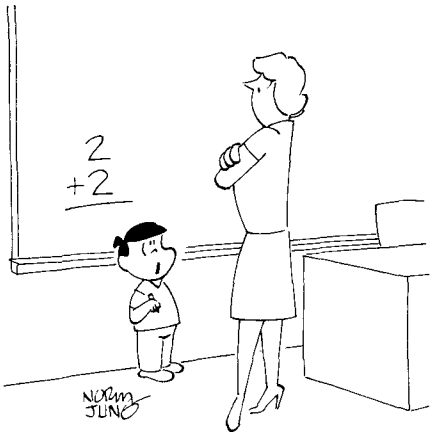
declared that "No public tax dollars should be used for private-school choice programs." What MTEA did not ask was where Kurth's own children were enrolled: Not the MPS, but private religious schools. Kurth himself sees no contradiction in his form of checkbook choice: "If other parents want to send their kids to private school, let them pay." He lost, but all four of the other anti-voucher candidates on the MTEA slate won.

Kurth is just one of the members of an establishment that believes urban public schools are fine—for everyone else's child. Consider Spencer Coggs, a Democratic state assemblyman representing Milwaukee's Central City. Seated in a corner of the committee room with a lobbyist from the teachers' union, Coggs voted against the voucher expansion—even though he had sent his own children to Urban Day, Milwaukee's largest choice school.

Mordecai Lee, point-man for the anti-voucher Wisconsin Coalition for Public Education (a "citizens' " group which nonetheless happens to count MPS, the MTEA, and the WEAC among its member organizations), is another prime example. A former state senator from Milwaukee who once owned a home on the boundary line of the Milwaukee Public School district, Lee has since moved to the suburbs, where, when the time came for his son's schooling, he enrolled the boy in the private University School—average tuition $8,640 a year. To put that price tag in perspective, the census shows the average *household income* in the neighborhood around Urban Day to be $8,792.

As for the teachers' union itself, records for the past decade show a steady exodus of board members and officers from the city to the suburbs. The MTEA's spokesman has a short answer to queries about where union leaders send their children to school: "That is information we do not track." As for the private-school proclivities of the teachers' union's rank-and-file, the MTEA president had this to say when the survey first surfaced 18 months ago: "We figure it's up to them. It's a private thing between parent and child, whatever they decide."

Precisely. □



"My politically correct parents say there are no 'right' answers—only options."

Handicapping Our Future

BOB M. THORNTON

THE education of America's gifted children is a dangerous disgrace. Bright youngsters have special needs, well documented by research, which have been all but dismissed by American education. As Milton Friedman has observed:

> Instead of emphasizing strengthening the opportunities open to the able, we have tended increasingly to shift into a state of victims in which the emphasis is on raising the people at the bottom. Now, no social progress has ever come from the bottom up. It's always come from the top small number pulling up the society as a whole and raising it.

In most states, spending on the gifted has been elective and parsimonious, while spending on special education has been mandatory and bountiful. For instance, nearly 85 per cent of the Federal Government's K–12 education moneys are spent on programs for the disadvantaged and handicapped, and on bilingual and vocational programs. Compare those efforts to the only federal initiative for the gifted, the "Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program," just begun in 1989. Its share of federal K–12 educational funding is 0.1 per cent. Further exacerbating the situation, state and local governments spend only two cents out of every $100 earmarked for K–12 on opportunities for gifted and talented students.

Excellent initiatives for gifted students do exist, but they are sporadic, limited in scope, and under constant attack. These programs are generally the first eliminated when funding reductions occur in a school system and as the need grows to find more money to spend on special-education mandates. These cuts are generally sold to the public through politically correct spins. Administrators argue that special classes for bright children might send the message to other children that they are not as smart. Furthermore, they say, any assistance for the gifted occurs at the expense of other students. Many influential educators also characterize special assistance for gifted students as "undemocratic" and have even suggested that helping them is simply a manifestation of ethnic and racial prejudice. Others soothingly explain that gifted students need very little teaching and no special support, since they are born with a built-in thirst for knowledge and achievement that schools cannot blunt or help. However, there is recent, overwhelming research evidence of the damaging consequences of underachievement, which this attitude fosters. Indeed, Friedler, et al., in a paper published in 1993, argue that "our school systems are actually giving tacit approval to creating underachievement in one ability group so that the needs of the other ability groups can be served . . . This . . . is egalitarianism at its worst."

Politically correct attacks on initiatives for the gifted are linked to a trend sweeping through our schools under the new buzzword, "inclusion." Theoretically, inclusion consolidates exceptional and regular students in a classroom arrangement where all share identical learning opportunities. This structure

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places our brightest youngsters in groups with other children who have different educational needs. The stated purpose is to assure that all children—physically and mentally handicapped, chronically disruptive, learning disabled, regular, and gifted—are accepted for what they bring to the learning mix.

Presumptively, the inclusive teacher keeps all students working together on activities, providing each of them a relevant learning experience. Even if this were possible, it would require special training and a large support staff. However, many school districts have yielded to fiscal temptation—and political and judicial directives--and dumped this full range of students into such classes without paying for the extra training and support. In consequence, inadequately trained teachers are compelled to spend most of their time dealing with students who are struggling to keep up. The inevitable result is a curriculum and teaching climate recast to suit the needs of the weakest learners.

The result of that, in turn, is that both average and gifted youngsters grow bored and lazy, display little academic achievement, and become more difficult to manage. An inclusive classroom may or may not be the least restrictive placement for a disabled student, but for the gifted and regular student it is too often the most restrictive environment.

ACCOMPANYING inclusion in American education was a "restructuring" of the school curriculum. Today's restructured curriculum emphasizes self-esteem instead of the mastery of content. In this restructured education, gifted students are under pressure not to appear "smart" in order to be more acceptable to their peers and teachers. Moreover, bright minority children are frequently accused of "acting white." The other children, meanwhile, may feel really good about themselves—until they're forced to compete in the marketplace without the necessary skills.

Educators have recently observed that this profound change in curriculum emphasis could be damaging to cognitive development, critical thinking, and national test scores. However, these warnings have come thirty years too late. The Great Decline of SAT scores from 1963 to 1980 revealed genuine deterioration in the education of our college-bound students. During this 17-year pe-

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riod, America's brightest young people quit learning, a trend that has become even more pronounced today. These youngsters clearly found that since the curriculum had been "dumbed down" to help weaker students, they did not have to continue to learn in order to keep up. Currently, bright high-school students, who receive top grades, routinely spend less than an hour a day on homework because it requires so little effort. Unlike their counterparts in Europe, over half the 17-year-olds in this country have not arrived at Piaget's cognitive-growth stage of formal operations, i.e., the ability to think critically. This is due to our restructured curriculum, which focuses more on repetition than on the advancement of hypothetical thinking. This cognitive decay has led several influential educators to simply "declare victory" and proclaim that the disease is the cure. That is, formal operations (critical thinking) are too difficult for most American students to master, and so they must be abandoned.

Over the past few years, many Americans became aware of the decline of their children's achievement and aptitude test scores. They brought intense public pressure on principals and teachers to improve them. However, instead of interpreting the declining test scores as a mandate to make significant changes in what, by any real measure, is a failed curriculum experiment, educators and politicians responded by demanding their national test makers dumb down their tests to reflect a restructured curriculum. Test publishers are hustling to respond to this pressure. Consequently, beginning in 1996, achievement test scores should begin to show "improvement." Even the highly regarded Scholastic Aptitude (SAT) has been renamed the Scholastic Assessment Test. The test has also been "recentered" (a/k/a dumbed down). In fact, today's 21-year-old college seniors are no longer expected to face material that most high-school students had to have mastered merely to get into a four-year college a few short years ago.

Clifford Shull, the 1994 Nobel Prize winner in physics, recently said that America is in danger of becoming a second-rate country if we do not start paying more attention to the education of our bright students. Our trading partners/competitors and even emerging and Third World nations have not been busy dumbing down their school curriculum and achievement/aptitude tests or starving the successful. Many have powerful gifted-education programs, and others are currently investing in them; they realize their country's intellectual and economic well-being is directly tied to the proper education of its children.

In this age of restructured curricula, recentered tests, and inclusive classrooms, it is crucial to recognize that gifted children also need to be nourished. Rather than dumbing down the curriculum and spending millions of dollars trying to politicize it, we need to invest greater effort in learning how to make it more structured and dynamic. Rather than homogeneous teaching of heterogeneous children, what we require is flexible groupings based on the academic and personal potential of each child. By improving educational opportunities for the gifted we can enhance the opportunity for all students and our society. □

The Best And the Brightest

SUSANNAH BLACK

LAST term I spent a weekend in Washington, D.C., attending the Princeton Model Congress, where all the private-school debate clubs gather to argue, hang around Union Station, drink crème de menthe from the hotel-room mini-bars—you can get into them really easily by unscrewing the back if you don't have the key—and get rebuked by Grand Hyatt officials for playing hacky-sack in the halls. It was, as usual, fun, and weird, but has been getting less weird and less fun every year. (This was my third trip.)

The twilight-zone alternative-reality feeling began in my first committee meeting on Thursday night. A bill was brought up, proposing a federally standardized sex-education curriculum. Public schools wouldn't *have* to adopt it; but if they didn't, the government would, as an incentive, withdraw "certain other funds"—specifically, funds for frivolous school extras such as honors science programs.

Other than myself, the opposition to the bill consisted of this senior with a really cool Southern accent, Winston Smith (not his real name). We argued that this was an incredible violation of the rights of states, school boards, and parents to decide the theoretically independent curricula of public schools, and was essentially punishing parents for their personal beliefs. Their kids would not receive funding they would otherwise get if, say, the parents' religion made it impossible for them to submit their kids to standardized federal indoctrination.

This promised curriculum will "impart healthy attitudes regarding sex." It was voted in nearly unanimously. Winston and I ordered Domino's pizza and watched pirated cable—amazing what a motivated teenage boy can do with a Swiss Army knife—and got very depressed.

The next day, bright and early, the assembly voted down my bill to change the name of the Department of Defense back to the Department of War—truth in advertising; clear speaking encourages clear thinking—because of the arguments of this guy from New Jersey who used the phrase *ex post facto* six times in a single sentence. I moved on to argue against a bill to abolish smoking in public areas. The thing is, "public" was defined as areas where the public goes—e.g., shops, restaurants—rather than areas under public, that is, government, control—e.g., post offices.

I said maybe that wasn't the government's business; and, if I were a restaurant owner who wanted to be a successful restaurant owner, I'd maybe prohibit smoking in my own restaurant because people breathing in other people's cigarette smoke might be less inclined to order that extra plate of French fries.

Miss Black is a high-school student in New York City.

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But that was—or should be—my own decision.

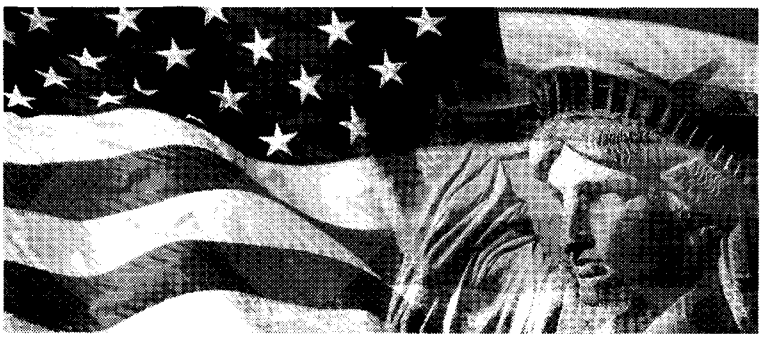
"What about doctors' offices?" I was asked. "Don't we have an obligation to protect the health of people whose health may already be precarious?"

Well, I said, I'm not going to go to a doctor whose waiting room smells like Joe Camel's armpit. And presumably, eventually, that doctor would figure out that the money he was earning wouldn't cover the down-payment on his Lexus, and he'd change his policy. It's called Capitalism, I said.

There was a shocked silence, which I endeavored to fill. "I mean, if the government knows what's best for us and feels free to express that as laws, what's to keep it from saying, 'No reading Upton Sinclair in public buildings, because somebody might start reading over your shoulder, and you'd be inflicting unhealthy ideas on them.'"

And what's to stop the government at privately owned "public" buildings? Why not say, "You can't smoke in your own home, because a friend might visit and get secondary lung cancer or something." If you say the friend could just visit someone else's house, well, couldn't people just choose to go to a different restaurant?

I shut up then. Debate was closed. A



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summary speech was given to the effect that it is the government's duty to protect its children. Very Plato. The bill was voted in.

After the session, Winston hit me upside the head and told me *never* to say the C-word in debate again if I wanted anyone to continue listening to me.

What C-word? I asked, thinking, croutons? catsup? It was lunchtime, and I was preoccupied.

"*Capitalism*," he said.

Yes, Gentle Reader, capitalism has become a four-letter word. But never mind. It was only *Model* Congress, right?

Right? □

Blindspots On the Right

CHESTER E. FINN JR.

CONSERVATIVES know many important truths about American education that liberals deny, resist, or haven't figured out. In no field is it clearer that the Left now rationalizes and defends the status quo while conservatism has become a powerful force for change.

Conservatives know that American youngsters are not learning nearly enough, that our schools and universities are operated for the benefit more of their employees than of their clients, and that we're not getting our money's worth from the huge investment we're making in those institutions. Conservatives see the depredations of multiculturalism, the carnage wrought by too much *pluribus* and not enough *unum*, and the perils of social engineering in the name of education.

Conservatives also understand that this cannot be set right by maintaining the producer monopoly or devising elaborate new "top-down" schemes. They know that teachers' unions, however eloquent their national leaders, are the monopoly's staunchest guardians.

The conservatives' reform agenda is bold, comprehensive, and in most respects promising. But it isn't perfect. Its shortcomings arise from illusions and half-truths to which conservatives are vulnerable, like a driver so anxious about the truck on the road ahead that he doesn't see the car in the blindspot alongside. I've spotted 11. There may be more.

1. ***Abolishing the U.S. Department of Education will cure what ails us.*** House GOP freshmen recently introduced a bill to wipe out this 15-year-old Cabinet agency, which arose from a Faustian pact that Jimmy Carter made with the National Education Association in 1976.

At the level of symbolism, abolishing the agency is swell. But the Department is merely the tip of an iceberg of educational mischief. Hundreds of programs, thousands of regulations, and billions of dollars have legislative and political lives of their own, separate and distinct from the agency that operates them. (In fact, tens of billions in education-related programs are run by other agencies, Carter having lacked the clout to assemble them in one place.)

Curbing the offending activities is thus more important than scrapping the Department, but it's also harder. Half the college students in America are aided by federal grants and loans. Much of what Uncle Sam does in education is entangled with civil rights, long a briar patch of politics and policy. Clumsy efforts to curb "special education" programs (by far the biggest unfunded mandate in education) will launch flotillas of children in wheelchairs to encircle the Capitol. Pulling down the "Department" sign doesn't begin to get at the hard issues involving the federal role in education.

2. ***Local control of schools is wonderful.*** Federal control of education is a disaster. State control is mostly bad news. Alas, despite buckets of rhetoric about the American tradition of "local control," it has been no recipe for bold improvement, either. With a few exceptions among our 16,000 school systems, the norm is smug or timid administrators who may speak eloquently to the Rotary Club but who also twitch when the teachers' union tugs their chain, who churn out misleading press releases about all the kids reading above grade level, who squander vast sums on bureaucratic overhead, and who conspire with the school board to shore up the monopoly. Nor have those boards been attracting America's best and brightest. Elections are often dominated by the unions—as happened recently in Milwaukee—and feature candidates whose main goal is to find jobs for cousins, fire an innovating superintendent, or launch themselves on a career in politics.

3. ***Standards are evil.*** The follies committed in the name of "outcome based education" and "Goals 2000," and the uproar over those wretched history standards, left a bad taste in the mouths of conservatives. But we must resist playing right into the school establishment's hands. The absence of clear standards against which student and school performance can be gauged remains one of the central failings of American education. If we don't judge quality in terms of results, we'll slip back into judging it by money spent, class size, "innovative" programs, how many years a teacher spent in graduate school, and other discredited measures.

4. ***Private schools are doing fine, if only more children could attend them.*** I like private schools. My kids went to them. I tried to help Chris Whittle create more of them. They're more likely to be safe places with a moral climate—no small accomplishment today. And there's evidence that their students, on average, do learn more. A little more. But we poke our heads in the sand if we think they're doing a swell job. Consider the National Assessment reading results from 1994: In twelfth grade, slightly less than half of private-school students were reading satisfactorily; 16 per cent could hardly read. Mind you, these were high-school seniors. Attending private schools. (The corresponding figures for public-school twelfth-graders were 32 per cent "proficient" readers and 31 per cent below the "basic" level.)

5. ***Vouchers will fix it.*** Recent legislative victories in Wisconsin and Ohio are proper cause for celebration. Many more poor Milwaukee children, and

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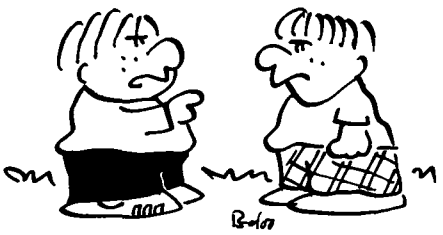
about two thousand Cleveland children, will now be able to escape their miserable public schools and choose among private alternatives. Cracking the monopoly and empowering parents to select their child's school is both a fundamental conservative goal and an essential feature of a free society. But vouchers are mainly a lubricant. They permit movement, but they do not supply the energy, imagination, or information base that will create true alternatives and enable shrewd choices to be made among them. Without clear performance benchmarks, good tests, and other sources of consumer information—lacking today nearly everywhere —even the best-intentioned parents will be at the mercy of schools' claims, with scant capacity to ensure that the one they're selecting is really better than the one they're fleeing.

6. ***Forget skills; what kids need is knowledge***. Liberal educationists make the opposite mistake. They pooh-pooh knowledge—When was the Civil War? What is 12 times 11? Where is Jakarta?—in favor of something they call "higher order cognitive skill." They're wrong, of course: skills without knowledge is like mortar without bricks. But a pile of loose bricks also has limited value unless you're going on *Jeopardy!*. Factual information is mainly useful if you can do something with it: solve a problem, work out an alternative, analyze a situation, compare the options, explain your conclusions, etc. Most conservatives acknowledge this but are so irked by liberal antipathy to knowledge that they overreact.

7. ***National Assessment is the work of the devil***. This federally financed testing program is our best source of data on student achievement and school performance. It's a sample-based test with a perfect record of safeguarding the confidentiality of individual student information. It's true that the Clintonistas are tinkering with it in worrisome ways, and the 103rd Congress weakened its independent governing board. These and other shortcomings need to be set right. But killing off the assessment itself would leave us with even less information on how our schools are doing and reduced capacity to hold anyone to account for his performance.

8. ***Old-fashioned schools are swell***. Conservatives often harbor warm feelings for the "good old days," and there were certain features of yesterday's schools (such as their relative freedom



"My ethnic group is more victimized than your ethnic group!"

from drugs and violence) that are worth retrieving. But few kids learned much in those schools either—enough, perhaps, for yesterday's farm and assembly-line jobs but not for the kind we need in order to compete with the Taiwanese and the Czechs. They were schools designed for the nineteenth century, bereft of technology, organized on a factory model, an agrarian calendar, and a daily schedule that assumed Mom would be home at 3 o'clock. They were staffed mainly by talented women who taught because they saw few other career opportunities. Much has changed. Now we need schools designed for the twenty-first century. But these will be very different from the schools we attended when Ike was President.

9. ***Schools should teach values***. Of course schools should be value-centered places in which people conduct themselves like attentive readers of Bill Bennett's *The Book of Virtues*. Of course many of today's schools (and teachers) have drunk too deeply at the troughs of relativism and non-judgmentalism. But just as liberals kid themselves into thinking that schools can prevent AIDS, drug abuse, and gun use, no matter what else is happening in kids' lives and neighborhoods, conservatives sometimes slip into the illusion that a proper curriculum can compensate for what children see on television and observe at home. Schools simply aren't powerful enough. They don't occupy that large a place in children's lives. We're lucky if they impart the fundamentals of chemistry and grammar.

10. ***The main problem is in the inner city, not in "our" schools***. Conservatives often share a middle-class fantasy that has been powerfully reinforced by the leftist ravings of Jonathan Kozol and by educators' propensity for denial: the belief that America's only grave education problem is "underclass" youngsters stuck in grimy, violence-riddled urban schools, while those who attend school in the sunny suburbs are doing fine. Alas, it's not so. Sure, many inner-city schools are dreadful cases of educational meltdown, with catastrophic consequences for their pupils. But millions of middle-class children from two-parent families are emerging from serene suburban schools without acceptable skills or knowledge. In upscale Montgomery County, Maryland, for example, a place where nearly everybody graduates from high school and 86 per cent go on to higher education, the local community college found last fall that 71 per cent of students entering from county schools were deficient in math, and half failed to meet the (none-too-exacting) English standards.

11. ***The business community will guide us***. Business leaders are sometimes good at describing the skills they seek in new employees, and some companies are generous donors of goods, services, and money. But when the time comes to fight political battles over education policy, they usually wimp out. If their customers or clients include school systems, they take pains not to upset them. Product boycotts by teachers' unions are no fun. Neither is controversy in the media. Far better to engage in some magnanimous corporate gesture, to deliver an eloquent speech about the value of education, or to join a blue-ribbon task force. Many companies—and most of the national business organizations—have hired people straight from the education establishment to advise them in this field. And few employers make their own personnel offices live by the principles that the CEO voices in speeches. Few even insist that job applicants produce a school transcript. Practically no one pays differential wages based on how well-skilled a new hire is. Just as colleges that admit everyone send the devastating signal to 16-year-olds that "in the real world, studying hard doesn't pay," so do tycoons who rage about educational excellence but don't actually reward it.

AT THE end of the day, conservative truths outweigh half-truths by a generous margin. Our agenda for transforming American education remains basically sound. But we'll get more done if we don't mislead ourselves by oversimplifying the tasks that lie ahead. We need to look into our own blindspots even as we keep watch on the 14-wheelers hurtling down the highway in plain view. □

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SPECIAL REPORT: OPINION ON THE CAMPUS

THE college survey reported on in the following pages is the first installment of a project undertaken for the Educational Reviewer. The design is to track the development of students' political and religious attitudes. Last term we asked freshmen at 12 colleges and universities to reply to our questionnaire, which we will send again to the Class of '98 when it reaches senior year.

We begin then with first-year students at: The Citadel, in Charleston, S.C., a military school with now and again one female cadet; Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va.; the University of Indiana at Bloomington; Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisc.; the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee; the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor; Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif.; the University of California at Los Angeles; the University of California at Irvine; and three members of the Ivy League. Yale, Brown, and Dartmouth.

The colleges are listed in roughly ideological order, from most conservative to most liberal, except that Brown is almost everywhere ahead of, that is to say behind, Dartmouth in ideological rectitude. The full results follow, on pp. 71–78; here are some highlights.

Home and School: Most of our 2,700 freshman respondents went to **public high schools** (*Question 2*). Stanford and the Ivies have the highest percentage of students who prepared at private schools (ranging from 30% to 35%). . . . At 10 of the 12 colleges, more than 60% of respondents come from households with **combined annual income** of over $50,000 (*Question 3*). (The exceptions are Liberty and UC Irvine.)

Duties and Rights: There is heavy backing for **tax-supported college financial assistance** (*Question 11*). Only Liberty (52%) and Yale (66%) dip below 70% in favor. . . . Only at The Citadel, Liberty, and Marquette do the majority favor **Strategic Defense** research and development (*Question 12*). . . . Ten campuses provided big majorities in favor of **government price controls on health costs** (*Question 13*). And even Liberty and The Citadel had sizable percentages (37%) in favor. . . . There were surprisingly substantial majorities at many of the liberal campuses for **diminishing the federal social-welfare system** (*Question 14*). . . . Heavy majorities at ten colleges opposed ending **federal aid for the arts**. The two defectors were Liberty and The Citadel (*Question 17*). . . . Seven of the colleges were split on **ending government-enforced affirmative action** (*Question 18*). Liberty and The Citadel had bare majorities in favor of ending it; Brown and U. Wisconsin had bare majorities opposed. That left only Marquette boldly favoring (64%) an end to such programs.

Liberty and Order: At ten campuses more than 30% favored **legalizing marijuana** (*Question 19*). At only three (Liberty, UC Irvine, Indiana) is there heavy opposition. . . . Only three colleges (the Ivies) favored **prohibiting the death penalty** (*Question 23*). . . . At eight colleges, majorities would give **legal standing to homosexual "marriage"** (*Question 24*). . . . At Yale 100% would not permit the **exclusion of homosexuals** from positions where they would be primarily responsible for guiding children (*Question 26*). . . . Only Yale had a majority (51%) in favor of **preferential consideration for designated minorities** in college admissions (*Question 28*).

Faith and Morals: On the matter of **formal religious affiliation** (*Question 32*) there were higher percentages each for Roman Catholicism and Protestantism than for "None" everywhere except UCLA and Brown. There were surprisingly high percentages for "Other," but from remarks jotted down on several questionnaires, it appears that these do not represent high concentrations of Zoroastrians or Jehovah's Witnesses: members of many Christian denominations which outsiders might consider "Protestant"—Free Baptists, Old Methodists, Church of Christ—declined so to list themselves. Judaism is the only other category with double-digit percentages, at five of the schools. . . . By majorities greater than two-thirds the freshmen at each college **believe in immortality** (*Question 33*). Percentages not believing ranged from 5 (Liberty) to 27 (Brown). . . . Those attending **religious services** at least once a week (*Question 36*) were in double digits at all the schools, with the numbers ranging from 15% (Yale) to 85% (Liberty). Five schools, however—the Ivies, plus U. Michigan and U. Wisconsin—had double digits in the "Not at all" category. . . . At no college did fewer than 37% say they **prayed to God** outside of religious services at least several times a week (*Question 37*). However, the percentage overall that never prayed outside of religious services was even higher than the percentage that never attended religious services. . . . The freshmen were asked whether they would approve, e.g., **extramarital sex**, **abortion**, **homosexuality**, a) without taking religious precepts into account, and b) taking them into account (*Question 38*). For most of these behaviors, the number who said they approved *even* taking religious precepts into account was far higher than the students' religious affiliation as stated in Question 32 would have suggested. . . . Asked for their view of **"the person of Christ"** (*Question 39*), majorities at six schools (ranging from 52% at U. Wisconsin to 92% at Liberty) chose "Christ is divine." Only at UCLA and Brown did less than 30% hold this view. Only at Brown, meanwhile, did more than 10% believe that "Christ may never have lived at all."

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Figures given throughout are percentages of total respondents.

1. Which sex are you?

	Male	Female
The Citadel	100	
Liberty	47	52
Indiana	45	54
Marquette	40	59
U. Wisconsin	46	53
U. Michigan	42	57
Stanford	44	55
UCLA	46	53
UC Irvine	40	59
Yale	61	38
Brown	43	56
Dartmouth	46	53

2. In what sort of school did you receive most of your secondary education?

	Public	Private	Parochial
The Citadel	81	15	2
Liberty	76	16	6
Indiana	73	20	5
Marquette	76	11	10
U. Wisconsin	85	8	5
U. Michigan	83	9	6
Stanford	64	31	3
UCLA	78	15	5
UC Irvine	73	23	2
Yale	63	34	1
Brown	58	35	5
Dartmouth	67	30	1

3. What is your parents' combined annual income? A. Less than $15,000. B. $15,000 to $30,000. C. $30,000 to $50,000. D. $50,000 to $75,000. E. $75,000 to $100,000. F. More than $100,000. G. No Answer.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
The Citadel	1	10	16	27	16	28	0
Liberty	7	15	27	25	11	13	0
Indiana	3	9	21	27	16	22	0
Marquette	1	12	20	22	19	21	3
U. Wisconsin	3	9	23	28	14	20	1
U. Michigan	3	6	13	17	21	33	5
Stanford	0	6	14	15	20	43	0
UCLA	1	4	13	30	21	29	0
UC Irvine	9	29	21	14	12	13	0
Yale	0	6	7	13	26	46	0
Brown	1	7	8	16	19	47	0
Dartmouth	0	4	9	17	28	40	0

4. Which of the following three designations most nearly describes your own political temperament?

	Conservative	Liberal	Independent
The Citadel	69	12	17
Liberty	80	4	14
Indiana	38	29	31
Marquette	36	25	37
U. Wisconsin	27	30	41
U. Michigan	30	37	31
Stanford	31	33	34
UCLA	28	39	31
UC Irvine	34	36	28
Yale	26	40	32
Brown	14	54	30
Dartmouth	27	36	35

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Professor Plum, in the classroom, with his mind.

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5. With which political party are you affiliated, either in spirit or in actual membership?

	Republican	Democratic	Other	None
The Citadel	47	45	2	4
Liberty	84	3	2	9
Indiana	44	39	4	12
Marquette	35	20	3	40
U. Wisconsin	30	35	6	27
U. Michigan	27	33	2	36
Stanford	29	36	3	30
UCLA	25	32	2	39
UC Irvine	32	40	4	22
Yale	27	37	4	30
Brown	10	42	3	43
Dartmouth	26	32	3	37

6-23. Indicate your views on the following twenty political proposals for the United States by writing in a letter signifying the following: A. Definitely in favor. B. Somewhat in favor. C. Indifferent/no opinion. D. Somewhat opposed. E. Definitely opposed.

6. Government sponsorship of investment policies

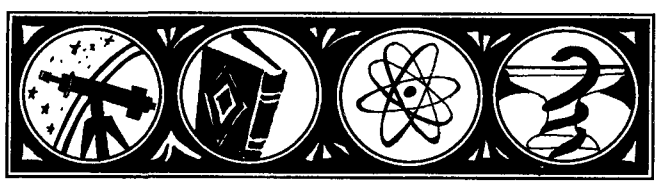
	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	3	5	70	16	4
Liberty	1	7	72	13	5
Indiana	2	7	62	15	2
Marquette	3	15	56	17	7
U. Wisconsin	5	11	70	10	2
U. Michigan	4	19	64	8	3
Stanford	4	12	66	15	1
UCLA	6	10	70	7	5
UC Irvine	4	9	69	14	2
Yale	1	15	77	0	5
Brown	9	7	70	2	10
Dartmouth	2	14	75	1	6

7. Government-based health insurance

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	11	22	15	22	28
Liberty	9	23	14	4	47
Indiana	22	28	12	20	16
Marquette	23	25	0	38	12
U. Wisconsin	36	19	0	22	21
U. Michigan	24	33	6	19	16
Stanford	28	33	1	25	11
UCLA	34	31	6	19	8
UC Irvine	25	34	3	20	16
Yale	26	32	0	28	12
Brown	39	45	0	14	0
Dartmouth	27	30	0	27	14

8. Continued Social Security programs sponsored by the government and compulsory in character

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	26	20	18	24	10
Liberty	23	19	14	23	19
Indiana	31	24	20	17	6
Marquette	26	33	10	18	11
U. Wisconsin	32	30	9	19	8
U. Michigan	26	39	14	12	7
Stanford	24	30	15	22	7
UCLA	30	25	17	13	13
UC Irvine	17	32	12	21	16
Yale	30	27	15	18	8
Brown	35	41	16	0	6
Dartmouth	22	33	15	24	4



9. The privatization of Social Security

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	17	30	23	19	9
Liberty	20	27	29	14	8
Indiana	11	21	34	29	3
Marquette	12	26	40	13	7
U. Wisconsin	8	20	39	21	10
U. Michigan	9	18	37	22	12
Stanford	13	18	30	20	17
UCLA	7	21	39	19	12
UC Irvine	18	20	26	21	13
Yale	7	15	46	18	12
Brown	2	10	31	27	30
Dartmouth	5	13	44	21	15

10. Racial parity in the sentencing of criminals (proportional representation in incarceration)

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	2	10	19	24	42
Liberty	4	9	39	14	32
Indiana	5	8	30	17	38
Marquette	6	6	31	16	39
U. Wisconsin	8	11	27	18	34
U. Michigan	8	9	29	14	38
Stanford	6	13	28	19	32
UCLA	10	9	27	21	31
UC Irvine	4	7	30	22	35
Yale	4	18	27	24	25
Brown	10	9	29	16	34
Dartmouth	5	12	16	34	32

11. Tax-supported college financial assistance

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	43	31	4	11	9
Liberty	33	19	8	22	16
Indiana	40	36	7	8	7
Marquette	47	31	4	9	7
U. Wisconsin	38	40	3	15	2
U. Michigan	41	37	9	8	3
Stanford	38	40	9	9	1
UCLA	48	30	3	11	6
UC Irvine	45	37	5	7	4
Yale	30	36	8	16	8
Brown	51	30	7	9	1
Dartmouth	43	27	4	19	6

12. Strategic Defense research and development

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	37	55	0	6	0
Liberty	28	27	13	16	14
Indiana	17	26	22	24	9
Marquette	18	37	14	15	14
U. Wisconsin	9	28	27	22	12
U. Michigan	8	27	24	26	13
Stanford	7	25	24	26	16
UCLA	8	27	23	25	15
UC Irvine	12	31	20	29	6
Yale	22	26	13	25	12
Brown	5	13	21	35	24
Dartmouth	18	25	12	28	14

13. Government price controls on health costs

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	17	20	20	20	21
Liberty	14	23	13	25	23
Indiana	28	37	13	14	6
Marquette	26	34	14	15	9
U. Wisconsin	33	28	23	7	7
U. Michigan	24	37	13	17	7
Stanford	22	31	18	19	8
UCLA	33	27	3	25	10
UC Irvine	25	30	12	25	6
Yale	41	17	13	16	11
Brown	27	33	17	14	7
Dartmouth	33	16	12	25	12

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14. Diminishing the federal social-welfare system

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	31	27	11	16	13
Liberty	47	19	0	28	4
Indiana	28	19	13	24	14
Marquette	39	29	11	14	5
U. Wisconsin	20	27	15	21	15
U. Michigan	19	27	10	26	16
Stanford	34	22	13	16	13
UCLA	20	26	22	15	15
UC Irvine	42	21	12	20	3
Yale	29	27	12	10	20
Brown	19	32	8	21	18
Dartmouth	26	29	20	15	8

15. Diminishing all welfare benefits, but substituting jobs, whether government- or private-sponsored

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	26	38	20	7	7
Liberty	23	38	4	19	14
Indiana	29	35	11	18	5
Marquette	18	31	10	26	13
U. Wisconsin	30	36	17	7	8
U. Michigan	28	36	10	17	7
Stanford	21	36	20	11	10
UCLA	35	34	10	12	7
UC Irvine	27	27	19	17	8
Yale	34	26	9	19	10
Brown	28	23	15	21	11
Dartmouth	36	36	10	12	6

16. Ensuring minority representation through electoral districting

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	2	18	27	23	28
Liberty	19	28	9	18	24
Indiana	8	16	33	25	18
Marquette	14	24	21	18	21
U. Wisconsin	21	29	11	14	23
U. Michigan	12	28	27	16	15
Stanford	7	29	32	26	4
UCLA	11	27	26	19	15
UC Irvine	2	18	37	25	16
Yale	11	28	32	13	14
Brown	18	32	26	9	13
Dartmouth	14	29	28	18	9

17. Terminating federal financial aid for the Arts

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	5	19	29	21	24
Liberty	16	27	26	10	19
Indiana	4	12	16	35	31
Marquette	7	21	16	22	32
U. Wisconsin	2	18	10	28	40
U. Michigan	4	11	17	30	36
Stanford	6	14	15	30	33
UCLA	12	10	17	20	39
UC Irvine	7	13	18	29	31
Yale	4	12	16	35	31
Brown	3	11	21	27	36
Dartmouth	2	21	17	22	36

18. Ending affirmative-action programs enforced by government

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	24	28	11	23	12
Liberty	25	29	21	15	8
Indiana	10	19	35	23	11
Marquette	35	29	11	20	3
U. Wisconsin	6	24	17	30	21
U. Michigan	15	19	22	26	16
Stanford	12	19	22	25	20
UCLA	21	24	20	20	13
UC Irvine	12	25	20	25	16
Yale	15	18	22	26	17
Brown	18	17	11	26	26
Dartmouth	20	29	10	27	12

19. Legalizing marijuana

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	4	23	21	18	32
Liberty	8	0	0	5	86
Indiana	15	20	9	31	23
Marquette	13	19	18	17	31
U. Wisconsin	16	23	12	15	32
U. Michigan	18	21	9	16	34
Stanford	18	13	24	11	32
UCLA	11	18	24	8	39
UC Irvine	4	6	9	25	54
Yale	16	20	15	12	35
Brown	15	17	22	15	29
Dartmouth	18	21	16	13	30

20. Legalizing all drugs

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	1	6	5	6	80
Liberty	0	4	0	4	90
Indiana	2	3	6	13	75
Marquette	0	9	4	15	70
U. Wisconsin	3	11	5	14	65
U. Michigan	3	5	2	20	68
Stanford	8	14	4	15	57
UCLA	2	6	15	14	61
UC Irvine	3	5	6	17	67
Yale	4	11	5	16	62
Brown	9	16	1	14	58
Dartmouth	3	13	2	19	61

21. Stricter enforcement of immigration laws

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	38	22	26	10	2
Liberty	47	23	19	4	4
Indiana	30	36	18	12	2
Marquette	29	22	15	23	9
U. Wisconsin	35	17	18	23	5
U. Michigan	29	32	19	14	4
Stanford	21	40	9	14	14
UCLA	29	23	3	24	19
UC Irvine	36	22	20	17	3
Yale	21	31	19	23	4
Brown	28	30	19	14	7
Dartmouth	25	36	20	15	2

22. Reducing legal immigration substantially

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	23	24	27	19	5
Liberty	14	23	38	20	3
Indiana	12	27	28	20	11
Marquette	9	20	27	23	19
U. Wisconsin	12	18	30	27	11
U. Michigan	14	18	29	25	12
Stanford	23	17	39	5	14
UCLA	10	28	25	27	8
UC Irvine	12	16	29	27	14
Yale	13	18	29	26	12
Brown	17	18	29	25	9
Dartmouth	18	11	31	25	13

23. Prohibiting the death penalty

	A	B	C	D	E
The Citadel	2	11	0	31	54
Liberty	10	9	0	16	63
Indiana	7	13	1	30	47
Marquette	13	13	9	29	34
U. Wisconsin	10	7	12	39	30
U. Michigan	12	10	14	27	35
Stanford	9	14	11	24	40
UCLA	18	22	6	21	31
UC Irvine	8	14	10	22	44
Yale	28	23	3	20	24
Brown	32	30	2	19	15
Dartmouth	19	33	5	27	14

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24-26. Please give your opinion on the following three statements.

24. Relationships between male homosexual couples or female homosexual couples should not be granted the same legal standing as traditional marriage between heterosexuals.

	Agree	Disagree
The Citadel	96	3
Liberty	95	4
Indiana	58	41
Marquette	40	59
U. Wisconsin	24	75
U. Michigan	32	67
Stanford	21	78
UCLA	30	69
UC Irvine	35	64
Yale	21	78
Brown	13	86
Dartmouth	23	76

25. Gay and lesbian couples/individuals should be denied the right to adopt children.

	Agree	Disagree
The Citadel	84	15
Liberty	95	4
Indiana	67	32
Marquette	38	61
U. Wisconsin	29	70
U. Michigan	33	66
Stanford	14	85
UCLA	27	72
UC Irvine	37	62
Yale	25	74
Brown	14	85
Dartmouth	30	69

26. It should be legally permissible to exclude homosexuals from employment or volunteer positions where they would be primarily responsible for guiding children.

	Agree	Disagree
The Citadel	70	29
Liberty	76	23
Indiana	21	78
Marquette	13	86
U. Wisconsin	9	90
U. Michigan	14	85
Stanford	11	88
UCLA	12	87
UC Irvine	23	76
Yale	0	100
Brown	1	98
Dartmouth	6	93

27. Should black separatism on campus be encouraged, discouraged, or prohibited as a strategy for helping blacks to adjust to life on a campus with a white majority population?

	Encouraged	Discouraged	Prohibited
The Citadel	6	60	34
Liberty	9	66	23
Indiana	16	81	1
Marquette	7	76	15
U. Wisconsin	14	77	7
U. Michigan	10	76	12
Stanford	15	77	6
UCLA	13	80	5
UC Irvine	17	76	5
Yale	16	75	7
Brown	12	80	6
Dartmouth	15	79	4

28. Should college admission offices give preferential consideration to designated minorities?

	Yes	No	No Answer
The Citadel	20	79	0
Liberty	33	66	0
Indiana	31	68	0
Marquette	11	88	0
U. Wisconsin	23	76	0
U. Michigan	24	75	0
Stanford	39	45	14
UCLA	31	54	13
UC Irvine	38	53	7
Yale	51	42	5
Brown	48	43	7
Dartmouth	42	49	7

29. Should colleges de-emphasize Western Civilization courses in favor of courses in non-Western cultures?

	Yes	No	Unsure
The Citadel	6	67	25
Liberty	14	33	51
Indiana	26	37	35
Marquette	12	45	41
U. Wisconsin	20	39	39
U. Michigan	16	37	45
Stanford	23	37	38
UCLA	31	27	40
UC Irvine	26	30	42
Yale	25	30	43
Brown	42	19	37
Dartmouth	33	17	48

30. Do you believe in natural rights?

	Yes	No	No Answer
The Citadel	79	13	6
Liberty	85	8	5
Indiana	61	17	20
Marquette	83	9	6
U. Wisconsin	76	12	10
U. Michigan	81	6	11
Stanford	76	14	8
UCLA	80	9	9
UC Irvine	83	8	7
Yale	79	9	10
Brown	85	2	11
Dartmouth	82	7	9

31. In your estimation, what is the relationship between a nation's population growth and its economic growth? 1. Population growth retards economic growth. 2. Population growth fosters economic growth. 3. Population growth is a neutral factor with respect to economic growth.

	Retards	Fosters	Neutral	No Answer
The Citadel	24	36	38	0
Liberty	19	40	39	0
Indiana	32	33	33	0
Marquette	25	36	37	0
U. Wisconsin	27	42	29	0
U. Michigan	39	25	27	0
Stanford	25	36	37	0
UCLA	30	31	34	3
UC Irvine	27	39	28	4
Yale	29	35	34	0
Brown	39	25	34	0
Dartmouth	37	31	30	0

32. With which of the following religious traditions are you formally affiliated? A. Roman Catholicism. B. Protestantism. C. Islam. D. Eastern Orthodoxy. E. Judaism. F. Other. G. None.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
The Citadel	27	65	0	0	0	3	3
Liberty	2	61	0	0	0	34	1
Indiana	30	41	0	0	5	17	5
Marquette	68	16	0	1	0	7	6
U. Wisconsin	26	23	1	0	4	11	19
U. Michigan	27	21	0	0	14	13	20
Stanford	23	22	0	0	13	18	22
UCLA	28	19	7	0	5	9	30
UC Irvine	27	20	1	3	0	38	9
Yale	24	23	0	1	13	20	17
Brown	21	16	1	0	19	12	29
Dartmouth	23	25	0	0	12	13	20

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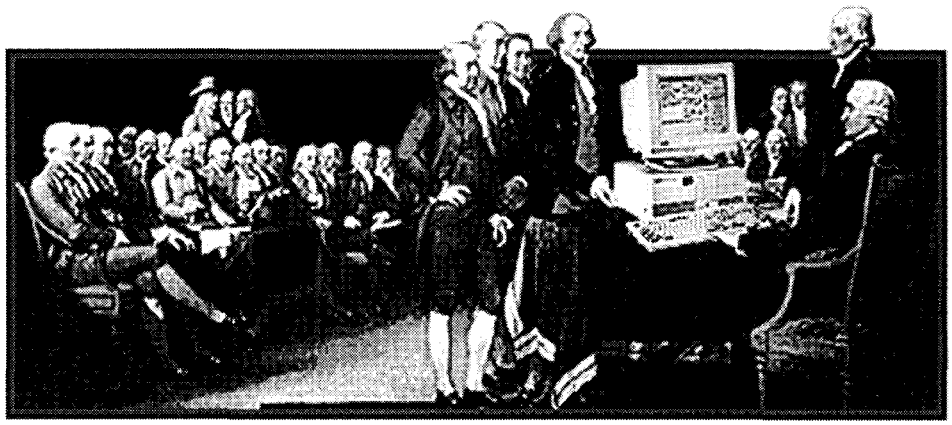

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33. Do you believe in immortality, if this is taken to mean the continued existence of the individual soul as a surviving entity after the end of organic life?

	Yes	No	No Answer
The Citadel	86	13	0
Liberty	88	11	0
Indiana	72	27	0
Marquette	77	14	7
U. Wisconsin	72	20	6
U. Michigan	71	23	4
Stanford	67	27	4
UCLA	71	26	1
UC Irvine	69	25	5
Yale	71	21	6
Brown	67	28	3
Dartmouth	73	20	5

34. In what (if any) religious tradition would you like to raise your children?

	My own	Another	None	No Answer
The Citadel	92	5	1	0
Liberty	90	9	0	0
Indiana	75	5	18	0
Marquette	85	3	10	0
U. Wisconsin	79	4	15	0
U. Michigan	74	7	17	0
Stanford	76	3	15	4
UCLA	72	7	17	2
UC Irvine	70	8	19	1
Yale	74	4	15	5
Brown	70	5	21	2
Dartmouth	71	3	22	2

35. Is the religious liberty clause in the First Amendment interpreted too strictly, to the disadvantage of religion?

	Yes	No	Unsure
The Citadel	20	39	39
Liberty	64	14	20
Indiana	22	57	19
Marquette	38	42	18
U. Wisconsin	21	41	36
U. Michigan	13	44	41
Stanford	21	54	23
UCLA	32	41	25
UC Irvine	9	38	51
Yale	6	59	33
Brown	11	52	35
Dartmouth	7	67	24

6. How often do you attend religious services? A. Once a week or more often. B. Twice a month. C. Monthly. D. Several times a year. E. Twice a year or less. F. Not at all.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
The Citadel	48	27	10	10	2	1
Liberty	85	6	3	0	4	0
Indiana	36	24	22	12	2	2
Marquette	31	20	5	28	6	8
U. Wisconsin	21	19	11	14	12	21
U. Michigan	18	12	7	27	19	14
Stanford	39	10	21	25	0	3
UCLA	41	13	22	15	5	2
UC Irvine	43	23	11	4	12	5
Yale	15	6	9	46	0	22
Brown	20	12	10	32	3	21
Dartmouth	16	9	13	29	21	10

37. How often, outside of religious services, do you pray to God? A. Daily. B. Several times a week. C. Only at specific crises in my life. D. Not at all.

	A	B	C	D
The Citadel	70	19	8	1
Liberty	85	9	4	0
Indiana	63	23	11	1
Marquette	30	36	23	9
U. Wisconsin	31	34	21	12
U. Michigan	24	25	32	17
Stanford	41	20	13	24
UCLA	55	28	10	5
UC Irvine	38	28	30	2
Yale	20	25	31	22
Brown	21	24	37	16
Dartmouth	25	12	40	21

38a. If you set aside religious precepts, would you engage in, or approve of, the following practices? (Please check all appropriate responses.) A. Birth control. B. Premarital sex. C. Extramarital sex. D. Divorce. E. Homosexuality. F. Abortion. G. Mercy killing. H. None of the above.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
The Citadel	90	66	3	82	0	4	3	9
Liberty	85	28	4	23	4	4	4	14
Indiana	92	86	2	90	54	71	50	7
Marquette	92	77	3	65	38	35	51	6
U. Wisconsin	93	85	4	89	78	67	64	5
U. Michigan	95	82	7	70	45	61	55	2
Stanford	91	79	1	82	78	65	63	7
UCLA	88	67	2	81	45	66	49	10
UC Irvine	80	58	1	56	31	50	35	13
Yale	90	84	3	87	84	71	68	3
Brown	94	86	5	89	80	79	62	5
Dartmouth	89	83	1	88	76	73	63	5

38b. Given religious precepts, would you engage in, or approve of, the following practices? (Please check all appropriate responses.) A. Birth control. B. Premarital sex. C. Extramarital sex. D. Divorce. E. Homosexuality. F. Abortion. G. Mercy killing. H. None of the above.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
The Citadel	81	35	0	45	0	1	1	18
Liberty	71	0	0	9	0	0	0	28
Indiana	85	73	0	52	31	26	1	13
Marquette	86	55	1	38	30	26	46	7
U. Wisconsin	89	78	1	75	69	63	53	7
U. Michigan	84	61	5	58	43	31	32	8
Stanford	90	77	0	80	75	63	59	8
UCLA	83	61	0	75	39	61	44	13
UC Irvine	72	29	0	50	22	31	28	20
Yale	85	78	0	80	75	58	42	6
Brown	90	79	1	80	71	65	54	8
Dartmouth	83	74	0	71	69	58	40	13

39. Below are four very brief, rough statements of various attitudes toward "the person of Christ." Please check the one that most nearly approximates your view. A. Christ is divine. B. Christ was a great prophet. C. Christ may never have lived at all. D. Another view.

	A	B	C	D
The Citadel	71	19	0	8
Liberty	92	2	0	4
Indiana	67	17	2	12
Marquette	61	11	3	23
U. Wisconsin	52	18	1	27
U. Michigan	57	12	9	20
Stanford	47	25	4	22
UCLA	27	39	5	27
UC Irvine	48	12	7	31
Yale	37	23	9	29
Brown	29	28	15	26
Dartmouth	41	22	8	27

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LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON?

Family Ties

Strobe Talbott's bumblings on the world stage are best explained if he's nothing more than a chip off the old block.

MARTIN SIEFF

TALL, slim, prematurely balding, distinguished, moral, decent, intense, unworldly, idealistic, and determined to impart the highest moral standards to the conduct of foreign policy. A close personal friend of the head of state. Distrustful of his own country's use—and, in his eyes, often abuse—of immense power. Who could it be but Nelson Strobridge Talbott III, deputy secretary of state in the Clinton Administration and key architect of its policies toward Russia and Eastern Europe?

After all, who else could write the following? "There are few things more dangerous than the constant anxiety for doing something definite. Many diseases may only be handled with gentleness and caution; violent treatment, the determination to force the issue at all costs, will result in nothing but catastrophe."

Actually, those words were written by another historian turned superpower foreign-policy maker, another tall, slim, prematurely balding, distinguished, moral, decent, intense, unworldly idealist determined to impart high moral standards to the conduct of foreign policy. A man whose physical as well as psychological attributes so uncannily foreshadow those of Strobe Talbott that it is astonishing that no one has previously suggested any intimate connection between them, namely Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, First Earl of Halifax and foreign secretary of Britain in the crucial years 1938 to 1940. Well known as one of the two prime architects of the catastrophic policy of appeasement toward Adolf Hitler, he was shunted by Winston Churchill into the post of ambassador to Washington, where he served until 1946, mingling widely with the East Coast establishment.

Now, Talbott was born on April 25, 1946, which means he was conceived in late July 1945 while Lord Halifax was still on the Eastern Seaboard. Coincidence? I wonder. Surely, here is a challenge to our current crop of ambitious history PhD candidates: Establish the whereabouts of Lord Halifax and Josephine Talbott, Strobe's mum, in the summer of 1945, when all and sundry were letting their hair down after the victory over Nazi Germany, and a brilliant career may be yours, or at least a story worth selling to the *National Enquirer*.

The spiritual affinity between Strobe Talbott and Lord Halifax is so great that the only thing apart from parentage that would seem to explain it is the Buddhist doctrine of the transmigration of souls. But since Lord Halifax lived on until December 23, 1959, presumably his soul was otherwise occupied during young Strobe's first 13 years on earth.

We could, of course, fall back on a more conventional Judaeo-Christian concept and say that the spirit of Halifax came to rest on Strobe, the way the prophet Elijah's passed on to his successor Elisha in the Second Book of Kings. But the Holy Spirit only transmits spiritual characteristics. Elijah was an hairy man and Elisha was bald. Lord Halifax and Talbott are both bald. Both have domed foreheads. Both have the same air of long-suffering saintliness, as if they are in a permanent state of constipation. No, Christian or Jewish theology will not help here.

BUT IT is the parallels between Halifax's policies and attitudes toward Nazi Germany, and Talbott's toward a chaotic and unpredictable regime in Moscow, that make the most compelling evidence. Nearly sixty years after a catastrophic series of blunders by clever fools and principled cowards gave us what Churchill called "the unnecessary war" that killed 50 to 80 million people, the same mindset has emerged in control of United States foreign policy.

Halifax was obsessed with coming to an understanding with Hitler's Germany. He thought nothing of serving up entire countries, such as Czechoslovakia, which stood in the way of his grand design. He poured out his wrath on them rather than on the Nazis. Talbott has similarly pursued a policy of Russia first, adamantly refusing to "endanger" the relationship by threatening

Mr. Sieff is foreign editor of the Washington Times.

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retaliation for Moscow's open military aggression against the new neighboring republics of Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan.

Until the German occupation of the Czech heartland in March 1939, Halifax adamantly opposed giving security guarantees to any of the Eastern European nations threatened by Hitler's aggressive policies. Talbott has systematically opposed any concrete moves to expand NATO into Central Europe.

Halifax drew from World War I and from his time as Governor-General of India the same kind of defeatist lessons that Talbott did from Vietnam. Halifax negotiated with Mahatma Gandhi and opened the way for the 1932 Second Round Table Conference that led to the 1935 Government of India Act. This made the granting of independence 12 years later under chaotically rushed circumstances almost unavoidable, despite the delaying efforts of Churchill during World War II. At least a million people died in the chaos of the subcontinent's subsequent partition.

Talbott was as blind to the consequences of the policies he supported on Vietnam—stop the war now—as Halifax had been to the consequences of his policy of getting out of India. He never appears to have linked those "principled" stands of his youth to the horrors of the Vietnamese boat people and the Cambodia genocide. Then Talbott generalized the erroneous conclusions he had drawn from Vietnam and appears now to be applying them to the hard men emerging in Russia, just as Halifax took the lessons he had drawn from appeasing Gandhi and applied them in his negotiations with another high-principled vegetarian, Adolf Hitler.

Neither of them saw combat in his youth. Talbott had a legitimate bad knee that, according to a *Washington Post* profile on July 14, 1994, by Cathy Horyn, kept him "out of the Mekong Delta but not off the squash courts and playing fields of Oxford." Later he confessed to "a moral discomfort that bordered on guilt" over the experience. Lord Halifax, only 33 years old when World War I began, served in the House of Commons rather than in the trenches.

Curiously, it was those like Halifax, Stanley Baldwin, Sir Samuel Hoare, and Neville Chamberlain himself—who had never risked their lives in the horrors of war—who proved most fearful of the next war. Most of the leading critics of appeasement—including Churchill, Eden, Leo Amery, Roger Keyes, and Harold Macmillan—had exceptionally gallant war records.

Halifax was often in another world. At Berchtesgaden in November 1937, on getting out of his limousine, the English nobleman at first mistook the Führer, who was already one of the three most famous men in the world (along with FDR and Stalin), for the chauffeur. Talbott, one feels, would make that kind of mistake with Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who, like Hitler, is a vulgar upstart by comparison and not the kind of fellow one's previous sheltered life has prepared one to cope with.

Talbott has already disastrously underestimated Zhirinovsky. When the Russian parliamentary elections were held on December 12, 1993, he confidently predicted that the democratic reformers led by Yegor Gaidar would win control of the new Duma and that Zhirinovsky would get nowhere. Instead, Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party won more votes than any other—24 per cent, which catapulted him to the forefront of Russian politics. Vice President Al Gore, who flew with Talbott to Moscow right after the results were announced, was virtually tongue-tied, since none of his briefings had prepared him for the eventuality.

The high-mindedness and air of spirituality that so impressed the friends of Lord Halifax, and still wows Strobe Talbott's dinner guests, somehow did not prevent both men from arrogantly and ruthlessly pushing their policies through, regardless of the warnings of those around them. As Elaine Sciolino wrote in the *New York Times* of December 29, 1993: "Last fall when Mr. Christopher was leaning toward offering early NATO membership to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, Mr. Talbott held lengthy meetings and drafted memos and argued that a new military division of Europe would both alarm and enrage Russia and Ukraine. His view prevailed."

Lord Halifax wrote in his diary after his 1937 meeting with Hitler that the Führer regarded the British government as still living comfortably in a fairyland of strange if respectable illusions. It clung to shibboleths—collective security, general settlement, disarmament, non-aggression pacts that offered no practical prospect of a solution of Europe's difficulties. Halifax appears to have been blind, as historian Corelli Barnett drily noted, to any thought that these remarks constituted an accurate description of himself and his colleagues.

No doubt Strobe Talbott, with a pained expression, would energetically refute such words as applying to him. And yet, what else do we hear from his lips but talk of collective security, general settlements, disarmament, and non-aggression pacts? How to explain this eerie phenomenon of *déjà vu*? Neither Buddhist, Christian, nor Jewish theology can help us. Just where *were* Lord Halifax and Mrs. Josephine Large Talbott in the summer of '45? □

Private Ratings

If we are to be required to purchase the V-chip, at least let us choose the rating system.

LEWIS M. ANDREWS

ONE of the most striking things about politically inspired applications of new technology is the degree to which they tend to be hobbled by outmoded habits of regulatory thinking. The latest example is the so-called "V-chip" legislation, a proposal by Senator Kent Conrad (D., N.D.)—co-sponsored by Indiana Republican Dan Coats—to help parents control their children's exposure to objectionable programing by requiring television manufacturers to install an electronic wafer capable of automati-

Mr. Andrews is the author of "Religion's Challenge to Psychology" in the current (Summer 1995) issue of The Public Interest.

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cally blocking out programs coded for various levels of sexuality and violence (hence the "V" in V-chip).

As envisioned by its supporters, the V-chip would work as follows: All television entertainment would be evaluated against a standard roughly analogous to the Motion Picture Industry Association of America's current classification for films, and the rating for each show would be electronically encoded in the black-bar area of the broadcast signal (the same black bar that appears when you twist the horizontal control on your set). The chip itself would be designed to distinguish one electronically encoded rating from another, and parents would be free to program it to determine what level of violent or sexually explicit content they were willing to allow into their home at different times of day.

ALTHOUGH there are signs of growing support for Senator Conrad's V-chip proposal—it has already been adopted in the Senate as an amendment to the telecommunications regulation bill, and President Clinton has just given it his official endorsement—a closer inspection of the concept reveals that while it sounds high-tech, it both perpetuates an antiquated approach to ratings and, even worse, prevents parents from taking advantage of emerging digital technologies for real control over home entertainment.

Advances in microchip technology have indeed made it possible for parents to protect their children from unwanted exposure to certain televised images in an economical way. Even allowing for differences in the estimated per-unit cost of mass-producing such a chip—congressional supporters say $5, the Electronic Industries Association trade group puts the cost at closer to $40—the history of consumer electronics would suggest steady price declines to the lower figure over time.

But the problem with the V-chip proposal as currently envisioned is not that it is ahead of its time but, on the contrary, that it fails to be innovative *enough*. The idea of having all television programs rigorously screened against a single standard, whether by an independent board or (as some imagine possible) by the shows' producers themselves, is qualitatively no different from what the old movie studios tried to do with the formation of the Production Code Administration under the Hays Office in 1934.

The historical experience of the last 61 years indicates that single-scale systems not only fail to discourage obscenity and violence—films are worse than ever in this respect, in spite of a uniform motion-picture code—but have some undesirable side-effects. When public morality turns conservative, as it did in the 1930s, monopoly rating scales tend to take a bean-counting approach to suggestive dialogue, which takes a genuine artistic toll. Gerald Gardner in his book *The Censorship Papers* recalls how Hays Office director Joseph Breen attempted to strip films like *Casablanca*, *Double Indemnity,* and *The Maltese Falcon* of their most memorable lines. On the other hand, when enlightened opinion becomes as mindlessly indulgent as it has in recent years, classification systems become a marketing tool for clever producers, who pick public fights over ratings and then conveniently make the necessary cuts just before their film's release.

Enthusiastic advocates of the current V-chip legislation, such as Massachusetts Rep. Ed Markey (D.), claim that their proposal is different from previous single-scale systems because it gives parents some individual control over what comes through to their homes. Not only would they be able to program the family TV to receive different levels of sexuality and violence, but they could alter the setting for the time of day. Yet this kind of end-of-the-signal choice within a single-scale system boils down to little more than being able to select the decibel level for whatever kind of sociological thinking happens to shape the current ratings classification. In just the past few years, we have seen excessive violence defined as everything from a large number of cartoon-like deaths in a John Wayne war movie to politically correct notions of the "psychological oppression" of minorities.

All this is not to dismiss the possibility of using modern technology to help parents screen the programs their children watch (although using technology is quite different from *mandating* its use). Responsible parents have always relied on the ratings of religious organizations, parents' magazines, and various community groups to help determine what their children should be watching; and in what will soon be a 500-channel world, such advice will be more appreciated than ever.

The real challenge is to adopt a system that gives parents the ability to choose a ratings source that best reflects their own tastes and convictions—in other words, to *privatize the input*. Under such a system, parents would have the option of subscribing to a wide variety of rating scales—including those provided by church groups, educational organizations such as the PTA, family-oriented magazines, even a home-school consortium—with program classifications beamed directly to the family TV. Such a system not only would give parents optimum control over home viewing, but would liberate many program providers, as well. For example, those

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producers who wanted to film stories that might fail some technical definition of excessive sex or violence—*Hamlet*, say—would not be at the mercy of a single scale or of the board applying it.

The good news is that the technology to privatize the V-chip already exists. All that is needed to allow an evaluator of choice to pass ratings directly to the family TV is a wireless receiver that can pick up a broadcast of VCR-Plus codes with attached grades, similar to the cellular devices now used to control building temperatures, activate home alarm systems, set highway traffic signals, guide the routing of express mail trucks, and make possible the outdoor check-in of car rentals.

The idea of merging VCR and cellular technology to allow parents to delegate rating decisions to "an arbiter of choice is already a very viable option," says Paul Dawes, the Business Development Manager of the California software firm Sybase, who testified recently on the V-chip before the Senate Commerce Committee. Gary Shapiro, Group Vice President of the Electronic Industries Association, agrees, adding that "there are a lot of ways parents could let their TVs be governed by a ratings service [of their] choice—telephone lines, microwave transmission, even using a computer disk received monthly in the mail."

Ironically, the one thing most likely to stall the rapid commercialization of such a parent-empowering super-V-chip is the current V-chip legislation. "By forcing TV manufacturers to develop a chip that reads ratings encoded in the black bar of the broadcast signal," explains Dawes, "you're relying on (outmoded) analogue technology," not digital. The effect will be to "prolong the dependence of home entertainment on analogue technology for years to come," erecting artificial barriers to advances that would offer parents real control over the family TV.

Unfortunately, these arguments do not seem to have much influence on politicians who are eager to prove they are "doing something today" about media violence or who are simply more comfortable with hierarchical notions of regulation. When President Clinton said in his recent defense of the current V-chip legislation before the fourth annual conference on family issues in Nashville, "I see no alternative to the problem," he was, in all likelihood, telling us the truth. He probably doesn't. □

Missile Defense

The Administration's defense of the ABM treaty is threatening the defense of the country.

DUNCAN HUNTER

IN the 1920s, budget cutting and a misunderstanding of new technology combined to cripple the development of military aircraft. Experts argued for the continued invincibility of the battleship. Air-power enthusiast Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell, in tests conducted between 1921 and 1923, proved them wrong by sinking four battleships, including the German *Ostfriesland*, which was considered "unsinkable" after surviving heavy shell hits without serious damage at the Battle of Jutland. Yet critics went to great lengths to explain away the tests. Mitchell was even court-martialed in 1925 for protesting too loudly in public about the country's lack of military preparedness. Only when Pearl Harbor was attacked 16 years later (as Mitchell had predicted) did Mitchell's reputation change from that of an eccentric to that of a prophet.

The Aircraft Age has now been succeeded by the Missile Age, and the 1990s debate on missile defense is eerily similar to the debate of Mitchell's day. As in the 1920s, critics of the new technology have tried to discredit evidence of its potential—most notably, the perform-

Rep. Hunter, a Republican from the 52nd District of California, is chairman of the House National Security Committee on Military Procurement and co-chairman of the House Missile Defense Caucus.

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ance of the Patriot missiles during the Gulf War. The Patriots certainly left much to be desired. However, they were new systems, with only a limited design potential for anti-missile purposes, and even so, they blunted the enemy's attack and did wonders for allied morale. And the technology can be expected to advance. The Patriots are as primitive compared to what is being developed in the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as Mitchell's fabric biplanes were to the warplanes that have come since.

SDI, launched by President Reagan in 1983 to protect the U.S. from nuclear-missile attack, was an integral part of the strategy that won the Cold War. Because we are living in the Missile Age, its importance has outlasted that conflict. President Bush recognized this and proposed GPALS (Global Protection Against Limited Strikes) to protect the U.S. homeland, American troops overseas, and supporting allied assets. The system was to incorporate land-based interceptors to defend both distant military theaters and the continental United States. However, the first line of strategic defense was to be composed of one thousand space-based interceptors known as Brilliant Pebbles.

The Clinton Administration promptly scrapped GPALS and all other space-based projects. Both strategic and theater missile-defense programs were cut substantially. National missile-defense efforts are currently limited, in the words of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, to "achieving and maintaining technical readiness . . . to provide the ability to rapidly (within 2 to 4 years) develop and deploy ABM Treaty–compliant ballistic missile defenses . . . given adequate funding." President Clinton's policy, in other words, is to wait until an unambiguous threat materializes before launching a program requiring several years to counter it, and then only within the bounds of an arms-control agreement negotiated over twenty years ago.

Critics of strategic defense argue that the demise of the Soviet Union makes it unnecessary. But hundreds of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles deployed by the governments of the former USSR are still operational, as are hundreds more submarine-launched missiles. The future of Russia and other former Soviet republics is unclear. Even if stated nuclear-reduction goals are reached, Russia will still possess some 3,500 nuclear warheads in the year 2003.

China poses similar questions for Asia. While China currently has only about a dozen ICBMs, it is building more. New designs include multiple warheads and mobile systems. In addition, China has 70 to 100 intermediate-range missiles and two submarines with 12 missiles each. Cruise missiles are under development. Peking is also exporting technology to Iran and Pakistan.

Some two dozen other countries are working on "weapons of mass destruction" (nuclear, chemical, and/or biological weapons) and over a dozen are developing ballistic missiles to deliver these weapons. The list of missile-armed states includes militant regimes like Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Libya, all of which could acquire usable nuclear weapons by the year 2000. The list also includes such would-be regional hegemons as Brazil and India. In response to the latter, Pakistan is developing its own missiles. Iraq is still trying to protect the core of its programs.

Missiles are cheaper to purchase and operate than modern combat aircraft. And, unlike conventional bombing attacks, missile strikes cannot be intercepted by fighters or standard anti-aircraft weapons. They can overcome the air supremacy that has been enjoyed by the U.S. in every conflict since World War II. Absent an effective defense, even crude weapons can thus be very useful.

"I've called this meeting to discuss the sudden wave of office-supply theft."

This is why ballistic-missile use is on the rise. Egypt, Syria, Libya, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Yemen have all used ballistic missiles in combat. Egypt and Syria fired a few, very inaccurate Frog-7 and Scud-B missiles at Israel in the 1973 war. In April 1986, Libya tried, unsuccessfully, to fire a Scud-B at the U.S. base on the Italian island of Lampedusa in retaliation for the American airstrikes sent against the Qaddafi regime the night before. Both Iran and Iraq used Scuds as strategic weapons in their "War of the Cities" in 1987–88. The Iraqi missile campaign had a major impact on Iranian morale, not because of the damage inflicted (which was minor) but because of the fear that the missiles might carry chemical warheads.

Recognizing the magnitude of the missile threat to U.S. interests, the House of Representatives has called for the deployment of a National Missile Defense (NMD) system at "the earliest practical date." The Senate has gone further, calling for a fully operational NMD, including space-based sensors ("Brilliant Eyes") by the year 2003, with an interim system of ground-based interceptors deployed by 1999. The House outdoes the Senate, however, on NMD spending: it would spend $822 million next year, in contrast to the Senate's $672-million proposal and the Clinton Administration's $372-million budget request.

President Clinton's National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake, has warned the Congress that Mr. Clinton would veto any bill that would "effectively abrogate" the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty. To judge from this veto threat, Clinton would rather defend the treaty than the country. Indeed, the Administration has been discussing with Russia an expansion of the treaty to place technological limits on the development of theater missile-defense systems so that they do not pose a "significant" threat to missiles of intercontinental range. This so-called "demarcation" issue could hamper the effectiveness of U.S. theater defenses by dumbing down their capabilities. Furthermore, the distinction between strategic and theater categories has a large element of arbitrariness. Americans usually equate "strategic" threats with ICBMs because of the distance of our

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territory from potential adversaries. But South Korea, Japan, Israel, and southern Europe are all within striking distance of enemies armed with short- or intermediate-range ballistic missiles.

THE Clinton Administration has concentrated on arms control and non-proliferation agreements to reduce potential threats. Certainly, the best defense is to prevent new dangers from emerging. But it would be naïve to believe that, over the long term, every threat will be so countered before it poses a danger to the United States. And it would take only one uncountered threat to trigger a chain reaction that could collapse the entire non-proliferation regime.

Clinton's commitment to the ABM treaty hinders missile defense. The treaty needs to be reconsidered, not expanded. A bilateral agreement limiting all defensive systems is ill-suited to a world with multilateral threats and dynamic technology. Why should the U.S. make an agreement with Russia to limit its (or its allies') defenses against Iran or North Korea? The Senate, responding to these concerns, has called for a select committee to review the continued value of the ABM treaty. Both Houses of Congress have called for a halt to the ABM demarcation negotiations, and urged that future negotiations with Russia focus on ways to expand the deployment of defensive systems so as to move beyond the Cold War concept of mutual assured destruction.

Lack of missile defense will hamper the foreign policy of Clinton or any other U.S. President. It must now be assumed that any act of aggression that endangers vital U.S. interests sufficiently to call forth a major intervention will involve a missile-armed adversary. Thus the formation of any coalition, the landing of troops, or the establishment of local bases will be conducted under the shadow of missile attack. If Washington and its allies lack any effective means of defense, this threat could be a decisive deterrent to action.

The confrontation with North Korea over its nuclear program presented such a situation. Negotiations were conducted against the backdrop of Pyongyang's ability to devastate Seoul and perhaps even strike U.S. bases in Japan. Though the Clinton Administration promised overwhelming retaliation, the prospect of such an exchange was less frightening to the Communist regime than to its opponents. The result was a reluctance to back demands on North Korea even with economic sanctions. The focus of talks shifted from eliminating Pyongyang's nuclear capability to "reducing tensions" on the peninsula by promoting economic development and trade. To the extent that the promise to give North Korea two new light-water nuclear reactors (worth $4 billion) looks like a reward to Pyongyang for its military buildup and advanced weapons programs (which, outside of the nuclear field, remain unconstrained), the campaign for arms control and non-proliferation has already been gravely weakened.

It is often said that a continental missile defense would be too costly. Yet the damage and loss of life resulting from even a few of these weapons, if fired at a United States that remained unprotected, would be many orders of magnitude higher than what it would cost to deploy an effective defense. America should not wait for a nuclear version of Pearl Harbor to vindicate the Billy Mitchells of missile defense. □

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

September 3, 1995

Dear Rusty,

I've loaded up Windows 95 and I'm multi-tasking like crazy! I've got some campaign e-mail on one screen, Tipper's all-fiber diet on another, and an article for the Washington Post—it's about people in New York City who steal other people's recyclables. I'm e-mailing it to you right now. All I've got to do is double-click on the MSN icon . . . here goes . . .

FOCUS GROUP #19 8/27/95 BEST WESTERN INN—LAKE HAVASU, ARIZONA. PARTICIPANTS: Bill, 47, white male; Otis, 64, white male; Marjorie, 34, black female; Dakotah, 23, white female; Keith, 42, black male; Dakota, 25, white male.

MODERATOR: Well, first, let me thank you all for coming here—

DAKOTA: Where's my 25 bucks, hosehead?

MODERATOR: If I could just—

MARJORIE: Are my kids okay outside?

MODERATOR: I'm handing out some pages—

OTIS: No one—that's NO ONE, Sunny Jim—is taking away my Medicare.

MARJORIE: I'm going to check on my kids.

MODERATOR: Well, we're not really talking about Medicare today. If I could direct your attention—

OTIS: Damn right we're not talking about Medicare, because NO ONE is going to take it away.

DAKOTA: Twenty-five bucks, doofoid.

DAKOTAH: Can you let the man talk, please?

MODERATOR: Thanks. What I'd like to talk about is your feelings about Bill Clinton and Al Gore.

OTIS: Hate 'em. Hate 'em both. And that wife of his tried to steal my Medicare.

MODERATOR: Um . . . okay, we'll start with Otis. Otis, you say that you quote hate unquote Bill Clinton and Al Gore—

OTIS: And his wife.

MODERATOR: Whose wife?

OTIS: Clinton's wife. The Medicare thief.

MODERATOR: And so you'd describe yourself as someone who is . . . what? Conservative? Liberal?

OTIS: I'd describe myself as someone who's entitled to Medicare.

MODERATOR: Okay, moving right along. Bill, you've been awfully quiet.

BILL: That's due to my incredible, simmering rage.

MODERATOR: I see. And to whom do you direct your rage?

BILL: My wife.

MODERATOR: I mean in a political sense.

BILL: Still her.

MODERATOR: Let me be more specific. Are you angry because as a white middle-aged man you feel that your place in society is eroding, and that the general lawlessness of the streets has come to make you feel like an outsider in your own country?

BILL: Well, I wasn't before you mentioned it, but, wow, I see your point. I am so freaking angry!

DAKOTAH: Then join a militia, Nazi man!

BILL: What?

DAKOTAH: I know all about you angry white men! My dad is one! At first he was real nice and real supportive and then when I changed my name to Dakotah and got my nose pierced he was like, a crazy man. So full of rage. I reject that rage.

MODERATOR: Dakotah, how would you describe your politics?

DAKOTAH: I wouldn't.

MODERATOR: You mean you can't describe your feelings?

DAKOTAH: No, I mean that you probably work for the government which killed Kennedy and Malcolm X and if I told you what I really believe you'd have me killed just like you killed Jerry Garcia.

MODERATOR: Keith . . . how about you?

KEITH: Oh, am I here?

MODERATOR: Excuse me?

KEITH: The black man always goes last.

MODERATOR: I was going clockwise.

KEITH: To you, clockwise. To me, a systematic method of silencing my voice.

MODERATOR: I'm terribly sorry.

KEITH: You think that white man is angry? Check under my hood sometime.

BILL: Are you saying that you're angrier than me?

KEITH: Damn right I am.

BILL: I'm WAY angrier than you.

KEITH: Oh yeah?

BILL: Yeah.

KEITH: Rodney King!

BILL: O.J. walks!

KEITH: Mark Fuhrman!

BILL: Gangsta rap!

MODERATOR: Gentlemen! Please! All I want to know is how you would describe yourselves politically.

KEITH: Angry. I'd describe myself as angry.

BILL: Me too.

OTIS: You know what I think.

MODERATOR: Yes, I think I can recall. Thank you all for coming.

FOCUS GROUP #19 COMPLETED.

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

In Praise of Shame

DANIEL LAPIN

THE LAWS of physics contain many elegant analogies to principles of human behavior. This comes as no surprise to an Orthodox rabbi, who believes that one God created both the physical and human worlds, and the laws that apply to each. The monotheistic traditions, beginning with Judaism, teach that God's act of creation preceded, and transcended, the physical laws that we know today. Without His intervention, the universe remains captive to the third law of thermodynamics: entropy is always increasing. In other words, defeating entropy is a God-like act. While only He can reverse entropy at the universal level, we humans can at least create small oases of physical and spiritual light. These oases, our neighborhoods, communities, and other associations, provide a valuable framework for our lives. Building them fights entropy, and is a worthy pursuit for beings made in God's image.

The natural tendency to entropy reveals that our normal question about the decline of civilization has the order of things backward. We usually ask, "What has caused our lives to become so much more squalid, expensive, and dangerous?" Instead, we should be asking, "What did we use to do that kept society so stable, safe, and prosperous?" To use another analogy, don't ask what made the airplane tumble out of the sky. The answer is simple—it ran out of fuel. Ask rather where the fuel came from and how it was converted into the thrust that kept the craft airborne.

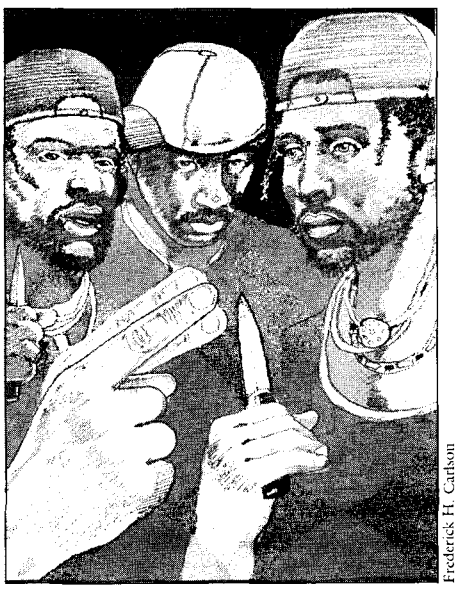
Similarly, when we study social decay, the question is not what brought foul-mouthed louts to menace shoppers in our malls. Instead, the critical questions are these: Why was a visitor to a theater or department store in the 1950s surrounded by neatly dressed people who exuded politeness and consideration? Why, back then, were our buses, parks, and other public places safe at all hours of the night? What made most young people marry and raise children responsibly? That was the miracle; what we see now is nature.

The fuel that used to keep the airplane of society airborne has run out. We are plummeting earthward. Instead of an altimeter in the cockpit, we have statistics on growing rates of illegitimacy. Instead of the queasy feeling in the stomach that comes from dropping too rapidly, we have the discomfort of sharing our streets, stores, and parks with angry, inconsiderate, obscene, sinister thugs. Like the whirling dial of the altimeter, the illegitimacy rate should more urgently claim our attention; we should realize how close we have come to hitting the ground.

How did we once maintain a society that was a model of prosperity, tranquillity, and politeness? The answer is that we employed several fundamental moral weapons which we have now become too timid to use (at least in this context). Most notably, these weapons include disapproval, ostracism, and other social sanctions.

TAKE, for example, the case of unwed pregnancy. The teenage girl who became pregnant was sent away to have the baby. The shame she brought on herself and her family was deep and lasting. In addition, the bastard child carried the disgrace throughout his life, with diminished career and marriage prospects. This is a model worth considering.

As we approach the end of the millennium, enlightened liberals throw up their hands in horror at the thought that ostracism and moral censure should be put to such barbaric uses. To them, I appear to be advocating the wholesale slaughter of civil rights. I would argue to the contrary, on three grounds. First, I suggest that the traditional use of ostracism and censure educated society on the proper ties between people, God, and community, while the abandonment of these tools has led to a rampant and dangerous individualism. Second, I maintain that proper and judicious use of social sanctions prevents far more problems than it creates—as do many other forms of punishment. Third, I show that no community can succeed without ostracism and censure, and that the liberals' own use of these tools (when it suits them) amply proves the point.



Frederick H. Carlson

In the "resolution of censure" which society once passed on the unwed mother, the modern liberal objects most vociferously to the clause that ostracizes the bastard. Even if the mother deserves her punishment, what possible justification can society have for tainting an innocent child, who certainly did nothing

Rabbi Lapin is president of Toward Tradition, a coalition of conservative Jews and Christians, and a talk-radio host in Seattle. This essay is excerpted from This Will Hurt: The Restoration of Virtue and Civic Order, *edited by Digby Anderson (National Review Books).*

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to deserve the stigma? A traditional answer takes us back to the story of Noah. Genesis 9:20–27 relates how Noah's son Ham sinned by viewing his father's nakedness, then bragging of it to his brothers. Interestingly, when Noah wakens, and determines to mete out punishment, he curses not Ham, the miscreant, but Ham's son Canaan.

Noah realized two critical facts about the human condition. First, he saw that civilization depends upon maintaining a "community of the generations." Everything we do affects the generations to come, and either honors or dishonors our ancestors. Even in our egalitarian society, we know that our positive achievements and our monetary success benefit our children. Why should we expect that our sins will not harm them? Indeed, Noah's second, and related insight, was that people care more about their loved ones than about themselves. Men will always sacrifice themselves for their wives, and brothers for their sisters. But even stronger is the mother's instinct to protect her children. Far from an act of injustice, the ostracism of a bastard is a gesture of profound respect for the mother–child tie, the most critical building-block of civilization.

The point of social sanctions, like the point of any other deterrence mechanism, is not to ruin lives, but to preserve the common welfare. In the 1950s, the number of pregnant schoolgirls who were stigmatized was tiny, and so was the rate of illegitimacy. The number of vagrants who were harassed out of respectable neighborhoods was minute, and the streets were safe and clean. More recently, the citizens of Kennesaw, Georgia (who, 13 years ago, passed an ordinance requiring all households to be armed), shot their first robber. This was obviously unfortunate for that robber; it may even have been unfair, since nothing in his hitherto prosperous career had prepared him for such a warm Georgia reception. But he could hardly be described as an innocent bystander.

It would, however, be a mistake to conceive of social sanctions as merely the spiritual equivalent of a shotgun. One reason ostracism and moral censure are so powerful is that they may be employed in widely varying degrees of intensity. The patterns of the business world reveal how subtle, carefully nuanced social devices can be just as effective as a scarlet letter. For example, very few companies find the need for written codes of dress, relying on non-verbal communication and even the occasional use of ostracism (e.g., conspicuously excluding a sloppy dresser from a prestigious luncheon) in achieving a high level of conformity to an established norm. Similarly, businesses can signal full acceptance, extreme disapproval, or anything in between, through the judicious granting or withholding of promotions, pay raises, perquisites, and the like. Even such simple indicators as who is not consulted about a decision (another minor form of ostracism) can have a powerful impact on a person's status and respect within a company.

A final and most critical point about sanctions: society requires a religious sense of moral conviction in order to authorize their use. "Noah walked with God," and thus had no qualms about cursing his grandson. Similarly, ostracizing an unwed pregnant teenager and shunning her child requires a Bible-believing, prayerful community. The only way sanctions tough enough to deal with current disorder are going to be effective is if they have a supernatural endorsement. Even the radical secularists I discuss below have made a religion out of their secularism. This explains why they often appear unreasonable, even to many who agree with them in principle on particular issues.

Let us now consider whether liberals can legitimately complain about the "justice" of ostracism and censure. Any English-speaking person who has read the newspapers or watched television in the past twenty years will quickly see that this question requires virtually no argument.

Observe the strangely religious fervor with which liberals attack, for instance, smokers. The crusade has even extended to attacking the innocent. Gigantic liability judgments against tobacco companies hurt countless innocent workers whose pension funds depend on the confiscated corporate dividends. The liberals respond to this by repeating platitudes about "the importance of sending a message."

"Sending a message" is also the justification often used by the campus crusaders for PC who have created an entire industry of vilification, using precisely the kinds of social sanctions liberals once claimed to repudiate. And anyone who requires a third example of this phenomenon should turn on the television during an Academy Awards show. The presenters and recipients, male and female, are beautiful, exquisitely dressed, and meticulously coiffed. With equal care, they wear red "AIDS Awareness" ribbons. It takes very little effort to imagine the social pressure these egalitarian aristocrats must feel to wear those ribbons. How else to account for such conformity in an otherwise radically individualistic crowd?

THE reliance of liberals on ostracism and censure to uphold their own norms shows that no community can survive without such sanctions. There is an irony, though, in liberal ostracism, because the moral justification for disgracing the wrongdoer depends on an assumption that liberals do not share with traditionalists.

In contrast to liberalism, the Judaeo-Christian tradition teaches that humans and animals are radically different. Traditionalists believe that manners were ordained by God, and that they serve primarily to enforce the distinction between human and animal. This concern for the human/animal distinction in turn depends on the religious belief that the unseen, spiritual world is more important than the visible, material world. The Talmud addresses both of these principles by laying down the rule that we must feed our hungry animals before we feed ourselves. This rule directs our attention to the fact that animals necessarily suffer from their relative inability to control their appetites and to anticipate the future. We humans, in contrast, can master the rumblings of our bodies (also called, revealingly, "animal instincts"), because we are spiritual creatures. A critical technique in the success of liberalism, therefore, has been to redirect people's attention from the spiritual to the material, and thus from the invisible future (or past) to the visible present.

The traditional view of man is of a creature able to foresee the consequences of his actions and to plan his life accordingly. Liberals reject this view, which may be the main reason they reject the use of disgrace and censure. Thinking of humans as just another type of animal, they fail to realize what effect the mere threat of social sanctions would have. As traditionalists understand, the beauty of shame is how infrequently it has to be used. □

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Age and Guile Beat Youth, Innocence, and a Bad Haircut

1970

1. Loathes the government
2. Ridicules the establishment
3. Smokes illegal imported things (Thai buds)

1995

1. Loathes the government
2. Ridicules the establishment
3. Smokes illegal imported things (Montecristo coronas)

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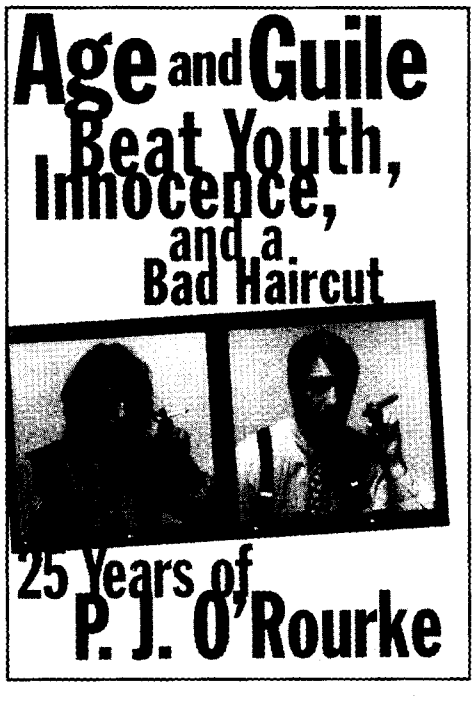

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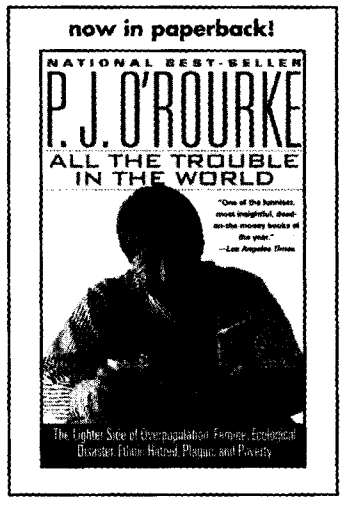

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A Conservative Mind

FORREST McDONALD

A DECADE or so ago, I wrote in NATIONAL REVIEW that the most impressive thing about Russell Kirk was his continuing capacity to grow, and I adduced in support of that proposition the way he had enlarged his understanding since his first masterpiece—*The Conservative Mind*, originally published in 1953—by delving deeply into the Scottish Enlightenment. I repeat that assessment now, for his memoirs, his thirtieth and final book, record that growth and may be his best work.

The genre has certain formulae, and

The Sword of Imagination: Memories of a Half-Century of Literary Conflict, by Russell Kirk (Eerdmans, 497 pp., $34.99)

Kirk follows them admirably. After the example of Caesar, Henry Esmond, and Henry Adams, he narrates his story in the third person, that mode, as he puts it, "being less embarrassing to authors who set at defiance the ravenous ego." A good memoir will be liberally sprinkled with anecdotes, and Kirk supplies them by the score. Some of my favorites concern his grandfather, a banker who was robbed at machine-gun point by the notorious "Machine Gun" Kelly; his wife, Annette, who gained admission to the White House by presenting a tarot card with her first name scribbled on it, the guard mistaking her for Annette Funicello; and a fake student demonstration Kirk saw being staged for television in California during the late Sixties. Also mandatory are descriptions of encounters with the famous and the infamous. Of the former, Kirk on Richard Nixon and Eugene McCarthy is engrossing; regarding the latter, Kirk's descriptions of debates with the likes of Tom Hayden, William Kunstler, and Dick Gregory are delicious.

Mr. McDonald is a professor of history at the University of Alabama. His most recent book is The American Presidency: An Intellectual History.

Knowing Kirk, one would expect periodic plunges into deep philosophical waters, and one gets them; but with the craftsman's keen feeling for how much the reader can take at a time, he intersperses them with lighter personal matters that most readers would not expect of the man. For example, he tells us that *Old House of Fear*, a Gothic romance that he wrote as a lark, sold more copies than all his other books combined. Or, we learn that Kirk was a tireless walker, having trod bypaths in Scotland, Ireland, Italy, and Spain, often covering thirty miles in a day and sometimes as many as forty. (One of his beefs about the relentless march of "progress" was that superhighway systems destroyed many of the best walking trails.)

The narrative, in addition to being a personal story and an informal history of much of the century, is the intellectual and spiritual saga of a philosopher and man of letters. As for Kirk's philosophy, we have encountered it in *The Conservative Mind*, *Randolph of Roanoke*, *Roots of American Order*, and other masterworks. This is the man of the permanent things, the one who rejects (and persuades us that we must reject) the claims for the superiority of the modern. But it is fascinating to behold the processes by which he arrived at his conservatism. Let me offer some glimpses.

When Kirk was an undergraduate, he worked summers at Henry Ford's Greenfield Village near Detroit. The Village was originally conceived as a museum that would portray the history of American technological progress, but then, sensing the destruction the automobile had wrought, Ford increasingly gathered simpler things, as if trying "to save from extinction the rural society of his boyhood." The automobile, Kirk perceived from his experience at the Village, was "a mechanical Jacobin, overthrowing dominations and powers, breaking the cake of custom, running over oldfangled manners and morals, making the very air difficult to breathe." When Ford built his first car in the 1890s, Detroit was "rather a pleasant city"; when Kirk worked at Greenfield Village, from 1938 to 1941, it was still safe for him to walk the streets of Detroit at night, unarmed; "later, he walked armed; later still, he found it prudent not to walk there at all." By 1994, Detroit was "mostly ruin and dereliction."

Another glimpse: during the war, Kirk served at the Army's Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, the Chemical Warfare Service's vast experimental field—observing "progress" of a different sort. There, "upon the dunes that were the beaches of a forgotten sea," he thought a good deal about time and eternity, and "moved farther toward a proper understanding of his own nature." When he had thought of such matters before, he had admired the intellect of the Enlightenment; now he began to realize that he had "drifted the wrong way." The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been splendid, but Kirk now understood that "he did not in truth sympathize with the chief currents of thought and feeling in those ages." Rather, what he genuinely respected in the Enlightenment "was the men who had stood against the whole tendency of their epoch—such men as Johnson and Burke."

The spiritual saga unfolded in a complex way. Kirk's parents were not churchgoers, and apart from an occasional visit to a Sunday school and the generally Christian morality of the small community where he grew up, he had only minimal exposure to religion. On the other hand, his kinfolk on both sides were mystics—they conducted seances, saw ghosts, talked with the dead—and Kirk believed in ghostly things all his life. Some of Kirk's admirers, upon learning of his interest in ghosts, might be disposed to write this off as a quirk, but it was no quirk: belief in the otherworldly was central to his being, as he casually but repeatedly attests throughout *The Sword of Imagination*.

His religious awakening was slow to come; it began in 1943, when his mother died. At the hour of her death, Kirk writes, he "knew next to nothing about religion." He found some consolation in Marcus Aurelius, but then, in a powerful description of his evolving thought processes, he tells us that he "commenced to move, very languidly, beyond Stoicism to something more." He began to "inquire within himself by what authority he presumed to doubt." Upon authority, he continues, "all re-

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vealed religion rests, and the authority that lies behind Christian doctrine is massive. By what alternative authority did Kirk question it?" Chiefly the likes of H. G. Wells and Leonard Woolf, whose other opinions he totally rejected. And if men like Johnson and Burke "gave credence to revealed religion, must not Kirk, in mere toleration, open his mind to the possibility of religion's truth?" And so, "by slow degrees," Kirk "began to perceive that pure reason had its frontiers and that to deny the existence of realms beyond those borders—why, that's puerility."

But "it was on no road to Damascus that Russell Kirk, in erring reason's spite, came to believe in the Apostles' Creed." In 1943 he went no further, but during the next decade his voracious reading included the theological works of Richard Hooker, Thomas Browne, and John Henry Newman, and in due course he read the Church Fathers, Augustine and Gregory and Ambrose. In 1953 he obtained instruction in Catholic doctrine from a Jesuit professor of classics, who was "surprised to learn that Kirk's reason for seeking him out was merely the yearning of intellectual curiosity." In time, his earlier Stoicism "was not effaced, but it was transmuted very gradually. Stoic insights had blended with Christian revelation in the early years of the Church, in the West especially; so it came to pass in Kirk's meditations also." In 1964 he was given formal instruction and was baptized.

Toward the end of this remarkable book about this remarkable man, Kirk tells us that he had sought three things in his lifetime. The second and third were "to lead a life of decent independence" and "to marry for love and to rear children who would come to know that the service of God is perfect freedom." In regard to these goals, he knew he had been blessed with success. As for the first, he was not as sure: it was "to defend the Permanent Things . . . to conserve a patrimony of order, justice, and freedom; a tolerable moral order; and an inheritance of culture." If the outlook for this end remains bleak, it is not nearly so bleak as it would have been without Russell Kirk's heroic efforts. □

Endangered Species?

CAROL IANNONE

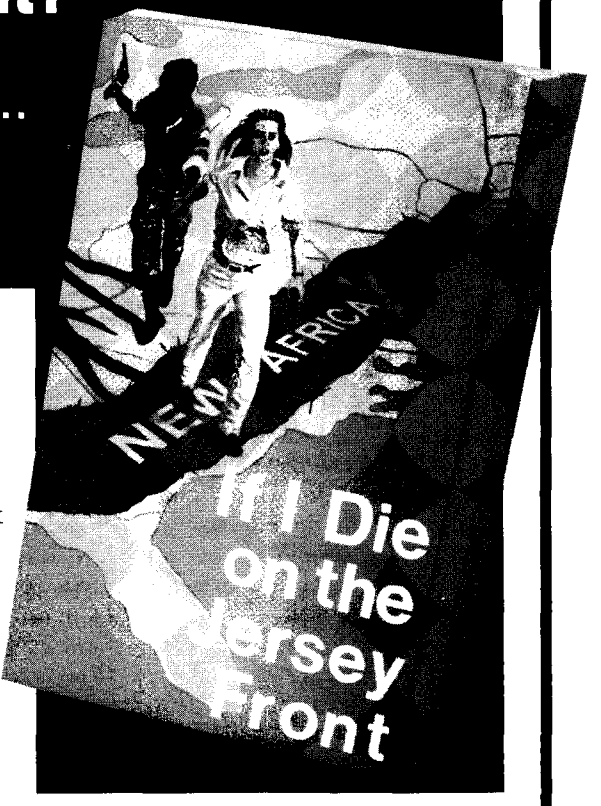
CRITICS of feminism are often accused of focusing on a few cases of extremism in the feminist ranks in order to discredit the entire movement. But if the extremists were as marginal as feminist sympathizers say, and if moderation and reason were in the ascendancy, books like this one would not need to be written. In describing the discontent and confusion that men are experiencing in face of the gender revolution, Ellis Cose, a contributing editor of *Newsweek*, shows that

Miss Iannone teaches at NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study.

Who Would've Guessed It?

When the end came for Uncle Sam...

it wasn't in a nuclear holocaust but in those seeds of racial hatred sown deep in the past.



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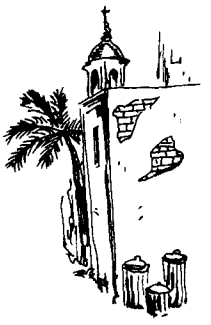
the feminist picture of men and masculinity needs considerable qualification.

For example, the phenomenon of widespread spousal abuse turns out to be a misleading contrivance built on exaggeration. Astronomical figures ranging from 1.8 million to 6 million abused women per year should be pared down to about 200,000, or perhaps 600,000. The higher figures are obtained by including such acts as pushing and grabbing along with assault, and sometimes by adding in all acts of violence against women, including those not perpetrated by spouses. (Even some of the lower figures include "lovers" as well as husbands, although non-marital abuse differs from marital abuse in its implications; but Cose does not go into this.)



Not only are the statistics being inflated, but there is an effort to disguise the extent of *female* violence. Researcher Murray Straus at the University of New Hampshire found that in abusive relationships "women sometimes are assailants, sometimes victims, and often both." Straus says that the supporting data on assaults by women were "intentionally suppressed" by other researchers, raising "a troublesome question of scientific ethics." For his pains, Straus was "excommunicated from feminist ranks," as he puts it. However, these improperly wielded statistics, Cose says, "have fundamentally shaped the national debate on how widespread spouse abuse is and how it should be dealt with." The picture is bad enough without exaggeration and women still do suffer greater injury, but advocates want to create a black-and-white portrait of female victims and male victimizers and, furthermore, seem to want us to think "that spouse batterers are ubiquitous, that millions of normal, seemingly well-adjusted American men routinely go home and whack their wives."

A Man's World: How Real is Male Privilege—and How High Is Its Price? by Ellis Cose (HarperCollins, 250 pp., $22)

Another area in which men have been maligned is in their role as fathers. Cose cites a telling incident in which Richard Weinberg, director of the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota, watched "two young girls acting out a domestic scene. One turned to the other and asked, 'Who's going to be the daddy?' 'Oh well,' her friend replied, 'we don't need a daddy. Do we?'" Eloise Anderson, director of California's Department of Social Services, insists that we must "reconsider marriage . . . and get rid of this whole notion that men are redundant." Cose doesn't stress it, but we needn't strain ourselves to uncover at least one source of the "notion" of men as "redundant."

Cose writes that "most experts . . . have come to recognize" that children need more "than just a mother's love," and that (mirabile dictu) "even other male role models don't really take the place of a father." Men have been falsely "accused of encouraging aggression in their children," an expert argues, while research shows that the presence of fathers helps children to regulate their behavior and that "it is when fathers are not present that out-of-control aggression seems to surface." Eloise Anderson claims that women don't "really pay attention to the safety of their children in the same way fathers" do. "Single moms," she continues, "bring men into the home whom they really don't know. *Their children are not safe.*"

Men also have trouble with the confusing double messages women are sending and with feminism's Newspeak definition of "equality," which favors only women. Cose ventures that men, far from enjoying privilege, "wonder whether they are being offered a devil's bargain: Give up the benefits of being a man but retain all the disadvantages." He argues, for example, that while women's careers have been aggressively advanced, men have not really been relieved of the need to be the primary breadwinner.

According to one poll, a large percentage of women and men continue to link masculinity with being a good provider. In comparison to men, women prefer more flexible work arrangements (even if that means lower earnings and less advancement), work fewer hours (even at management levels), take leaves more often, wish to retire earlier. "Role flexibility" applies mainly to women, Cose says.

Cose has performed a useful service in giving a man's-eye view of the gender revolution (and he covers other topics as well, such as dating and sexual harassment). But this is not to say that Cose is a critic of feminism. On the contrary, he seems to have bought most of its premises and simply seeks to defuse some of the tensions that have arisen from overemphasis on the grievances of women, to which he wishes to add the grievances of men. He declares that "some real problems and differences between the sexes still exist" and that "both genders are struggling against centuries of conditioning," with the implication that the "differences" are suspect and that all the "conditioning" has been negative. He declares too that "the political and economic battle for equality is far from won," without asking what political and economic equality would actually mean, especially in the light of some of his own evidence.

If, for example, a large number of men and women continue to think of men as the main providers, and a large number of women prefer less demanding jobs, will the resulting discrepancy in wages be recognized as the product of these predilections or will it register as another sign of "inequality" that must be rooted out? If so, what is the goal? We frequently hear that we have "a long way to go," but where are we going? Must we have a fifty–fifty breakdown in every job, profession, and career? Must women hold half of all elective offices and public positions? Must men perform exactly half of all child care? Do we assume that women taking time off from jobs in order to raise children are not exercising a preference but doing so only out of conditioning that must be altered or necessity that must be relieved?

More fundamentally, do we believe that there are differences between the sexes that may have to be respected as inherent and that may prompt different outcomes for society? Or do we believe that men and women are blank slates needing only to be wiped clean of their current coding and reconstituted according to the most progressive version of the feminist project? If so, who decided on the desirability of this project? If not, let's not permit activists to use these continuing differences to torture our society, demanding further changes that many do not even want. Indeed, we all have enough to do appreciating the wonders feminism has helped to bring us already, such as increased female poverty, huge rates of single motherhood, and a large population of wimpy men. And all this from a movement with only a few marginal extremists. □

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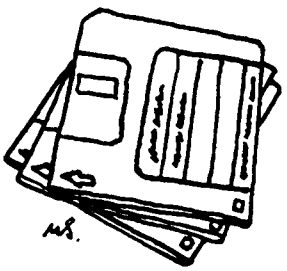
Frankly, My Dear . . .

JOHN SHELTON REED

IN several promising novels and a book of short stories, Richard Ford covered some ground, literally: Mississippi to Mexico to Montana. He really established his reputation as an up-and-coming heavy hitter, however, with *The Sportswriter* (1986), which introduced us to some characters and a setting that most book reviewers could more easily get with: writer Frank Bascombe, Frank's soon-to-be-ex-wife, Ann, and the town of Haddam, New Jersey. Now Bascombe is back, in a book hyped as what the Great American Novel would look like if such a thing were any longer possible. Could this be?

Independence Day, by Richard Ford (Knopf, 448 pp., $24)

It's 1988, Ann has remarried and left Haddam with the children, but Frank is still there, and he's selling real estate, or trying to. After a hundred pages, about



all that has happened is that Frank has shown a house to a couple and they haven't decided whether to buy it or not. You may begin to suspect that this is going to be a book in which nothing much *does* happen, and this suspicion is largely borne out. Sure, a few things happen *nearby*, but even a murder in the same motel has no consequences for the story. Promising characters float past—a trucker, a waitress, some trashy tenants, what passes these days for a good buddy, Frank's fellow realtors, his ex-wife's new husband—but they just make brief appearances and never return. Most seem to be more interesting than Frank himself, but his current lady friend is an exception. She says things like, "Something's crying out to be noticed. I just don't know what it is. But it must have to do with you and I. Don't you agree?" (Frank has no idea what she's talking about, and he's not the only one.)

Anyway, Frank visits this woman, he visits his ex-wife, he takes his unhappy son to the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, the kid gets beaned by a pitching machine, and that's about it for plot. Lord knows the man has problems, but (aside from putting his difficult clients in a rental property) he doesn't resolve much of anything. If Ford's saving all that for his next book it strikes me as a mistake, because it means that, basically, this one is just you and Frank Bascombe for 448 pages, and the question becomes, Is this the kind of guy you want to hang out with?

My guess is that for most female readers the answer will be no: they'll be reminded of irritating old boyfriends, or first husbands. Some middle-aged men may identify with Frank now and again, but I'm here to tell you that's not always a treat either.

Frank is actually at his best when he's talking about his job; in fact, the ro-

Mr. Reed teaches at the University of North Carolina. He is the author of Whistling Dixie *and other books about the South.*

"Russell Kirk's final work is a tribute to him as a seminal thinker. . . . A wonderful read, indispensable to those interested in a conservative's view of a half century." —WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, Jr.

"This literary and personal autobiography by Russell Kirk serves to remind those who knew him — either in person or in his writings — of his constructive and honest thought and commentary for more than half a century, and it gives people of this generation and later generations the chance to meet him, as he was, and to learn of his thought." —EUGENE J. MCCARTHY

"Russell Kirk's memoirs will surely be counted among the great autobiographies of our age. I remember the father of postwar American conservatism as a private man, but in *The Sword of Imagination* he has lowered his guard and revealed his inner life in wonderful and often surprising ways." —JOHN ENGLER, Governor of Michigan

"Kirk's memoirs will take their place alongside the exemplar of the genre, *The Education of Henry Adams*. They fascinate, they charm, they enlighten." —FORREST MCDONALD, University of Alabama

Russell Kirk

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mance of real estate has never had a more articulate spokesman. He really believes that "you don't sell a house to someone, you sell a life." He gave up writing to become a realtor, he says, because "in this way I could pursue my original plan to do for others while looking after Number One, which seemed a good aspiration as I entered a part of life when I'd decided to expect less, hope for modest improvements, and be willing to split the difference." He likes selling real estate, he's good at it, and he has some idea why: "My greatest human flaw and strength, not surprisingly, is that I can always imagine anything—a marriage, a conversation, a government—as being different from how it is, a trait that might make one a top-notch trial lawyer or novelist or realtor, but that also seems to produce a somewhat less than reliable and morally feasible human being."

Trouble is, it also seems to produce someone who's less than stimulating company. Frank is almost a caricature of a self-absorbed leading-edge babyboomer; he has aged, but he hasn't grown up. He gives us a lot of tedious reflection along these lines: "A successful practice of my middle life, a time I think of as the Existence Period, has been to ignore much of what I don't like or that seems worrisome and embroiling, and then usually see it go away." Most of his fortysomething wisdom is bogus, such stuff as "ole Davy Crockett's motto, amended for use by adults: Be sure you're not completely wrong, then go ahead," or "It's not true that you can get used to anything, but you can get used to much more than you think and even learn to like it."

Unfortunately he's right when he says, "I'm no hero, as my wife suggested years ago." And despite having hurt a good many people he's not a real villain, because, damn it, he *means* well. You can tell because he's for Michael Dukakis in the election that's going on just outside the novel's field of vision. This detail adds to the general impression of ineffectuality, but Frank's not a fool (at least he's not very funny). Nor is he a victim of anything but his own fecklessness. What he is, as he puts it himself at one point, is "a doofus." (I'd have said a nebbish, but that's close enough.)

Now, this may seem an odd thing for a Mississippian to be, even one who lives in New Jersey. But it's not unprecedented. We've seen similar well-meaning, dissociated, displaced Southerners before. "Of course," Frank says, "having come first to life in a true *place*, and one as monotonously, lankly *itself* as the Mississippi Gulf Coast, I couldn't be truly surprised that a simple *setting* such as Haddam—willing to be so little itself—would seem, on second look, a great relief and damned easy to cozy up to." Recognize the tone?

This is Walker Percy country, of course. *The Moviegoer* and *The Last Gentleman* went over much of this ground, and if you like early Percy, you could like this book. But not as much. □

FILM

Obnubilated

JOHN SIMON

THE German idiom for abject stupidity, "*dumm wie die Nacht*" (stupid as the night), has no American equivalent. Being good, democratic egalitarians, we have no paradigm for stupidity. We can be honest as the day is long, quick as a bunny, bright as a button—but stupid as . . . what? Let me propose "stupid as a Hollywood adaptation of a foreign film." Stupider than that would be hard to find. Take ***A Walk in the Clouds***, a piece of lifeless plastic made from an intensely human Italian film of 1942, which ushered in a new realism in contrast to Fascist cinema.

Alessandro Blasetti's *Quattro passi fra le nuvole* (*Four Steps in the Clouds*) was written by four gifted men: Cesare Zavattini, the legendary scenarist of, among other things, all of De Sica's masterpieces; Piero Tellini, who later worked with Fellini; Giuseppe Amato, himself an able director and producer; and Aldo de Benedetti, a gifted popular playwright. Blasetti was a fine and varied filmmaker who, in Pierre Leprohon's words, "survived the Fascist era thanks to his wit and irreverence, without sinking to propaganda films." This fountainhead film of neorealism is the story of Maria, a pretty young woman impregnated and deserted by her lover, and now returning by bus to the family farm. She is terrified of her father, and tearfully confides in the sympathetic fellow sitting next to her: Paolo, a married traveling salesman. As Georges Sadoul summarizes it, "She persuades Paolo to go with her . . . and pretend to her father that he is her husband. He does so, hoping to leave in a few hours. But he becomes so lost in his surroundings that he spends the night. Maria's parents discover the truth but, under Paolo's eloquent pleading, forgive her, and Paolo returns to his wife and children."

Paolo was played by Gino Cervi, one of Italy's outstanding comic and character actors; Maria was Adriana Benetti, one of the most exquisite actresses ever. The music was by Alessandro Cicognini, the Nino Rota of his day. The film progresses touchingly from sweet to bittersweet comedy, as Paolo and Maria are drawn to each other, but the young man must return to his nagging wife and kids. Everyone in the story is working-class and down-to-earth, and the action takes place, with Aristotelian rigor, within 24 hours. As Zavattini noted in his diary from that war-torn and Fascist-muzzled Italy (in *Sequences from a Cinematic Life*), "A return to man, to the creature who in himself is 'all spectacle': this would liberate us."

There is no liberation whatsoever in *A Walk in the Clouds*, a movie whose mental level is so low that even the title is literalized. The Italian farm has become an enormous Napa Valley vineyard owned by a wealthy transplanted Mexican, and called Las Nubes, the clouds. (Get it?) This owner is Alberto Aragon (poor Giancarlo Giannini), a shouting, bulging-eyed hothead verging on a blithering idiot. He is surrounded by a bevy of flutterily solicitous womenfolk and an army of even more faceless servants. But the real patriarch of Las Nubes is Alberto's father, Don Pedro Aragon—a name worthy of a Spanish king—who is none other than Cupid-

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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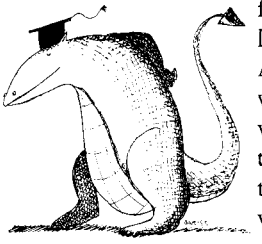
playing Anthony Quinn, always four steps in an alcoholic cloud and as blusteringly lovable as all getout.

Paolo—now Paul Sutton—is Keanu Reeves, or perhaps his computer-activated facsimile, in a performance that cannot lay claim even to virtual reality. This Keanu clone has only two expressions, whereas the real Reeves, as is widely known, has at least three. Maria is the Mexican actress Aitana Sanchez-Guijon, who might be all right with a different script and direction. The script is by Robert Mark Kamen, a known no-talent, and Mark Miller and Harvey Weitzman, a couple of unknown ones. It is of a remarkable ineptitude: no point in it is made in less than triplicate, as if Kamen, Miller, and Weitzman each had to say the same platitude at least once. Thus Paul and Maria meet cute not once but thrice before they team up. Thus Paul, just discharged from the Army in 1945, has recurrent nightmares about the war—at least three or four lengthy and noisy flashbacks to the most studio-made horrors to give the picture Significance, and totally unnecessary to the story at hand. Paul was also an orphan, which permits some of the nightmares to combine combat and orphanhood with the most tasteless pretentiousness.



Las Nubes is a vinous Cloud Cuckooland in which little actual work is done; it is always awash in bizarre harvest festivals and other grape-oriented saturnalia, staged and shot with the utmost unreality. Thus the estate's nubile girls dance with tucked-up skirts and bare feet as they tread out the grapes, and the camera in overhead shots records a Busby Berkeleyish choreography snaking through a gargantuan vat. Thus mariachis appear at the drop of a sombrero for all kinds of stilted serenading. Thus when a sudden cold snap hits the vineyards, fires are lit, and everybody grabs Icarus-like wings to prance through the vines and fan the heat onto them. And thus when, later on, a flash fire roughly the size of the Dresden firestorm races through Las Nubes, everyone tries to stop it in a colorful way. Paul strives to beat it out with his jacket, and Maria, fresh from bed, emulates him with the sheer jacket of her flimsy negligee—it's a wonder she doesn't end up like Saint Joan.

The movie was produced by the terminally vulgar Zucker Brothers, and directed by Mexico's Alfonso Arau, whose sickening *Like Water for Chocolate* had the peons cheering on both sides of the Rio Grande. Representing a debased cinematic branch of magic realism, Arau and his equally tacky cameraman, Emanuel Lubezki, have made their American debut movie even kitschier. We get spidery, spun-sugar images, like a child's crayon drawings, the whole thing bathed in an iridescent mist to make you long for the intervention of a Haze Office. And the dialogue is commensurately saccharine: "The heart wants what the heart wants"; "She's like the air to me"; "What shall we toast to?" "To life!" These noble sentiments are spiced with condign illiteracies, e.g., "less questions" and "the both of you."

Of course, there is a wrenchingly happy ending after Paul performs the heroic feat of uprooting the hallowed vine from which the Aragon vineyards sprang—with Wagnerian bravado worthy of Siegmund pulling the sword Nothung out of the tree. From that sole surviving vine Las Nubes will rise again, and Paul, whose exaggeratedly slatternly wife (we must not miss the point) has obtained an annulment, is free to marry Maria. Ugh!

■ It is easy to overpraise *The Brothers McMullen*, a modest, ordinary movie whose virtues are mostly negative. It was made for little more than $20,000 by the 27-year-old Edward Burns. To save money, he cast himself as one of the leads, on top of writing and directing; he used friends, family, and his family's house on Long Island for actors and locations. The movie was shot in 16 mm. and blown up; most negative virtue of all: it won the top prize at the contemptible Sundance Festival. It deals with the lives of three working-class Irish Catholic brothers in an unfashionable part of the Island, which sets it off from other movies; the most exotic *The Brothers McMullen* gets is to shoot a scene on the subway.

The brothers are Jack, the eldest, married to the decent Molly, who feels it's high time for a baby even as Jack is reluctantly—but not all that reluctantly—drawn into an affair with the flashily independent Ann, a cast-off girlfriend of Barry, the middle brother. An aspiring filmmaker (did I hear anyone whisper "Autobiography"?), Barry drops girls at their mere mention of a second date,

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and instructs his younger brother, Patrick, in strategies of noncommitment. Patrick, equally obsessed with women and the prohibitions of Catholicism, is torn between Susan, a rich Jewish girl who wants him to convert to Judaism, marry her, and work for her father's clothing business; and Leslie, a free spirit determined to head West, and not uneager to share the adventure with the vacillating Patrick.

Then there is the romance between Barry and Audry, a young would-be actress he keeps bumping into in the Village in the cutest ways this side of *A Walk in the Clouds*, and who, much to his discomfiture, keeps growing on him even *after* she stops rejecting his advances. Though Burns gives nearly equal time to each of the brothers, the interest gravitates to the Audry–Barry episodes, largely because their interpreters are the most charismatic. Burns himself is handsome, easy-going, and loved by the camera. As Audry, Burns's real-life girlfriend of five years' standing, Maxine Bahns, is adorable, overcoming a slight amateurishness with a charming mixture of spunk and vulnerability.

Lest we assume that everything here is autobiographical, the brothers' late father is made out to have been a swine—whereas the real-life Burns Sr. was the executive producer of the movie. Except for the opening scene in a cemetery after old McMullen's funeral (unseen, because too costly to stage), where the liberated widow takes off there and then to join her true love in Ireland, the movie tends to ring true, and is intermittently amusing. But triteness can wear a blue collar as easily as a white one, and spout Catholicism as cheerfully as agnosticism or the gospel according to Spike Lee. The test will be what Burns can do with his next feature, with a real budget and without the autobiographical indulgences of the first. □

APPRECIATION

My Favorite Amendments

CHARLTON HESTON

THIS may surprise you, but I'm not the only man in Hollywood with an appreciation for the Second Amendment. There are numbers of gun owners—collectors, hunters, sport shooters—in the film community, plus many more who keep firearms for protection. I suspect, in fact, that there are more filmmakers who are closet gun enthusiasts than closet homosexuals. Steven Spielberg has one of the finest gun collections in California, but never refers to it, and never shoots publicly. Can you imagine the most famous filmmaker in town worried about his reputation?

Still, many people in the film community oppose firearms, some quite virulently. During the Los Angeles riots in 1992, a good many of these folk suffered a change of heart. As smoke from burning buildings smudged the skyline and the TV news showed looters smashing windows, laughing as they carted off boom boxes and booze, I got a few phone calls from firmly anti-gun friends in clear conflict. "Umm, Chuck, you have quite a few . . . ah, *guns*, don't you?"

"Indeed."

"Could you lend me one for a day or so? I tried to buy one, but they have this waiting period . . ."

"Yeah, I know. I remember you voted for that. Do you know how to use a shotgun?"

"No, I thought maybe you could teach me. This is getting a little scary."

"I noticed. It does that sometimes. I could teach you, but not in an hour. You might shoot yourself instead of the bad guys. The Marines are coming up from Pendleton; that'll end it. When it does, go buy yourself a good shotgun and take some lessons."

My friend writer-director John Milius got more calls than I did. His answer was more forthright: "Sorry. They're all being used."

Public opinion on this issue seems to be shifting, in view of rising violence. No police force can guarantee always to protect all citizens, nor are the police legally responsible for failing to do so. Besides, it seems to me ethically questionable to expect a policeman earning $35,000 a year to risk his life to protect you if you accept no responsibility for protecting yourself.

Unlike some people, I support the First Amendment as vigorously as I do the Second. Indeed, the whole Bill of Rights is a wonderfully unique instrument.

Though in recent years the Bill of Rights has often been cited to justify various federal intrusions into individual rights, its original intent and prime purpose was to protect, in every Article, the rights of citizens against the intrusion of their government. There's no other governmental codicil in the world like it. I'm a fan.

Now consider the First Amendment. Two years ago I won my most significant victory in the public sector since the civil-rights marches in the early Sixties—and then we were following Dr. King. This was just me versus Time Warner, the biggest entertainment conglomerate in the world.

I got a call from Tony Makris, my guru on matters relating to Washington. "Chuck, you ever hear of a rap performer named Ice-T?"

"No, why would I? I remember some rock critic saying, 'Rap is made by people who can't sing, can't play an instrument, and can't write lyrics. It's vocal graffiti!' I believe I can sign that."

"I think you ought to hear these lyrics. They've teed off just about every policeman in the country, but Time Warner's stonewalling them because it's a hit record, and the press is tiptoeing around because the guy's black."

Tony was right. The lyrics (aside from being badly written) were an obscene ode to the killing of policemen. Along with a handful of others, I did a press conference about it, and Warner backed down to the extent of changing the album title from *Cop Killer* to *Body Count*, without removing the song. They were also sending out demo CDs in cute little black body bags. (The corporate counterculture at work.) The press was very cautious on the issue. My civil-rights credentials dating back to 1961 protected me from the accusations of racism that would otherwise have been hurled. I was told that Ice-T himself threatened to kill me. He didn't, though.

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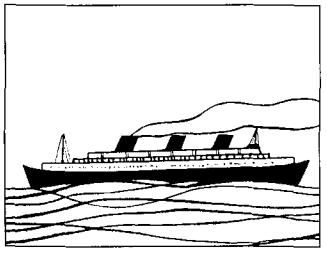
a stockholders' meeting scheduled in Beverly Hills. I happened to hold several hundred shares of Time Warner stock (I've since sold it). This meant I could attend the meeting.

There was the usual gaggle of media outside the auditorium. Inside were perhaps a thousand shareholders. I doubt that any of them had ever heard a rap album, though this material is an enormously profitable cash cow for Time Warner. Of course that was the whole problem. As someone trenchantly observed, "It's not the money . . . it's the *money*."



By this time President Bush, police across the country, members of Congress, and major religious and media figures had condemned *Body Count*. Ice-T had weighed in with the comment, "I ain't never killed no cop . . . I felt like it a lot."

Even at this point, the chairman–CEO of Time Warner, Gerald Levin, could have said—no doubt with perfect honesty—"Look, I don't read rap lyrics. If some clown in the record division screwed up, we can fix it." Instead, he chose to defend the album in terms of the First Amendment, which was ridiculous. Ice-T, in search of his 15 minutes of fame, certainly could have performed his work publicly—but Warner had no obligation, constitutional or otherwise, to pay him to do so. Its motivation was not the Bill of Rights, but simple corporate greed.

I had the floor for perhaps only eight or ten minutes, but it was enough. I spoke briefly and quietly to the meeting, then simply read, in full, the lyrics of "Cop Killer," which almost no one in the room had heard or seen, they being too offensive for the media to quote. Unhappily, I can't quote them here, since Time Warner would almost surely refuse permission, and my editors are also reluctant to print what is basically racist filth. I'll simply say that the lyrics begin with "F--- the police . . ." and go on from there.

"Mr. Levin," I said. "Jews and homosexuals are also sometimes attacked, though of course not as often as police officers. Let me ask you: If this piece were titled, 'Fag Killer,' or if the lyrics went, 'Die, die, die, kike, die!' would you still peddle it? It's often been said that if Adolf Hitler came back with a dynamite treatment for a film, every studio in town would be after it. Would Warner be among them?"

The room was death-still. I gave them one more dose, a few lines from another cut on the CD, less notorious but even more disgusting. In this "song," Ice-T fantasizes about sodomizing two 12-year-old nieces of the next Vice President of the United States.

I left the room in an echoing silence, then repeated much of what I'd said inside to the media. One or two journalists said, "You know, we can't run that."

"Yeah, I know," I said. "But Warner is selling it." A week or so later, the company pulled the album, pretending that Ice-T had asked them to. A month after that, they terminated his contract.

I asked the women's organization NOW to join me in condemning the album, in view of the vicious lyrics about sodomizing little girls. It never did. I've never understood why. Perhaps NOW didn't want to attack a black man.

Still, I'm proud of what I did, though now I'll surely never be offered another film by Warner, or get a good review from *Time*. On the other hand, I doubt I'll get a traffic ticket very soon. □

DELECTATIONS

Chewing the Fats

DIGBY ANDERSON

HOW to find if a cook is good? Simply look in the refrigerator. If the necessary cooking fats are there, all well and good. If not, forget it and him or her. Warn your friends, shake the dust from your feet, declare a general anathema.

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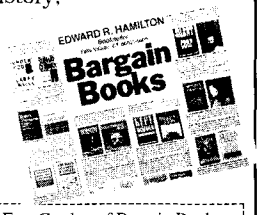

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dishes depend on the use of fats or oils. Obviously, deep-fried dishes, from beignets of brains to simple French fries, require fat. Shallow-fried dishes—fried liver or fried eggs—require fat. But roast dishes such as leg of pork need fat too. Even meats rich in their own fat such as duck, want some added fat to start off the roasting. Grilled fish, especially the drier fish, require lots of added oil. Even dry-grilled dishes, fish or meat cooked straight on a plancha or a Le Creuset–type grill with only salt, need to be anointed with some oil or fat just before serving. So do barbecued dishes. In fact, take back that 80 per cent. It's nearly 100 per cent, because even poached dishes need a final greasy accompaniment. Poached turbot needs its hollandaise, boiled bacon its parsley sauce with lots of butter.

So no fat, no cook. But your glimpse of the fridge tells you even more. Not only must there be fats but the right fats. The minimum for any half-decent conservative cook is six: clarified butter, goose or duck fat, pork fat, chicken fat, beef fat, and—this last not in the fridge but in some dark cupboard—olive oil. The sophisticated cook will have more: goose *and* duck fat, a game fat (e.g., pheasant), several different pork fats. These are all soft fats—that is, fat that has been melted down on its own or boiled down in water. Good cooks will also have some of the solid originals. How on earth can you make proper puddings without beef suet?

The right fat for the dish is decided by two things, temperature and taste. French fries need to be cooked at a high temperature, so they need a fat with a high boiling point, which means beef fat or one of the more expensive oils. But if they are to taste right, there is no contest: it's beef fat. Dishes such as cassoulet and many from the southwest of France require goose or duck fat. Nothing else will do. It's a lie to call a stew of mutton, sausage, and beans without duck or goose fat a cassoulet.

Recipes from Calais to Dijon and from the north of Italy may well require butter, preferably clarified. You do know how to clarify it don't you? Excuse me? You . . . Oh, for goodness' sake, look it up in any one of the dozens of cookery books you have ostentatiously displayed on your shelves.

Recipes from Lyon to the Mediterranean are more likely to demand olive oil. You want two sorts. Forget the pretentious charades. Just find one with a strong taste and one with a lighter taste. Try several varieties of each to find the best. No, there are no shortcuts. You will have to learn to taste them for yourself. Chicken fat has fewer uses, but it is extremely good for frying chicken eggs and for frying bread and sautéing potatoes. Lamb fat is nearly useless. I used to know a cat called Mini who wasn't. He sat under the butcher's block in a halal butcher shop and when Mohammed shaved the fat off the mutton and let it fall to the floor, Mini obligingly and enthusiastically vacuumed it up. Pork fat has the widest use as a general frying agent. It is necessary too for pastry and for frying offal.

Last, the good cook has not only a variety of fats but lots of each. Fats can be re-used, but it is better not to do so too often. They pick up flavors, and even agents that remove contaminating flavors, such as ginger briefly fried in the fat, are not infallible. Of course fats should not be labeled. Color and smell are enough.

So there we are. Once again that's what good conservative cooking is like. No shortcuts, no easy options. Do it properly or not at all.

Tough? There is a compensation. The only way to maintain a good stock of fats is regularly to eat large joints of beef from a good-sized animal; lots of fat and full-flavored red pork, again from an adult; plump geese, pheasants, and ducks, and hens with a good deposit of fat around the legs and up the bottom. It's a pleasant enough duty. □

Mr. Anderson edited This Will Hurt: The Restoration of Virtue and Civic Order, *an excerpt of which appears on p. 87.*

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The History and Geography of Human Genes, by Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Paolo Menozzi, and Alberto Piazza (Princeton, 1,032 pp., $150)

JUST as a hundred years ago the Victorians worried about reconciling Darwin with God, today every honest mind must be perturbed by what appears to be the mounting scientific evidence of racial differences. This perturbation is all the greater because of the dishonesty and personal viciousness that characterized much of the reaction to *The Bell Curve* when it broke the taboo on public discussion of the issue last year. Since much of the evidence was already well known to scholars, the question now must be whether science will inform politics or politics chill science. This book, although by respected scholars, appears to be evidence that politics is winning. It has been advertised as an antidote to *The Bell Curve* because of a passage proclaiming the "scientific failure of the concept of human races" due to the problem of overlap and gradation between groups. Of course overlaps and gradations exist in all systems of classification, but taxonomy remains fundamental to science. And the genetic evidence in the balance of the book makes clear that human beings can indeed be grouped roughly in accordance with traditional racial divisions. —PETER BRIMELOW

The Lost City: Discovering the Forgotten Virtues of Community in the Chicago of the 1950s, by Alan Ehrenhalt (Basic, 336 pp., $23)

COMMUNITARIANISM, Ehrenhalt's creed, is a movement in search of definition, much like Ethical Culture or Quakerism. Its real problem is that its central goal—balancing individual rights and community responsibilities—depends less on any workable program than on historical, cultural, and economic movements and cycles. But that's okay. Good writers are not necessarily—in fact are seldom—good systemic thinkers. And Ehrenhalt is a very good writer. When he drops the abstractions, his depictions of three Chicago neighborhoods—a Catholic parish on the Southwest Side, Bronzeville, and Elmhurst—are finely drawn and evocative, as are his portraits of Chicagoans of the period. As a writer, Ehrenhalt has both style and wit: e.g., urban renewal and public housing transformed Bronzeville into "a much more uniform high-rise slum." So what does Ehrenhalt give us? A splendid pre–Vatican II community of clearly defined, civilized, and civil neighborhoods, run efficiently, economically, and humanely by an authoritarian mayor and the finest political machine ever devised. Is that communitarianism? If so, sign me up. —JOHN R. COYNE JR.

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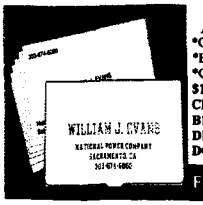

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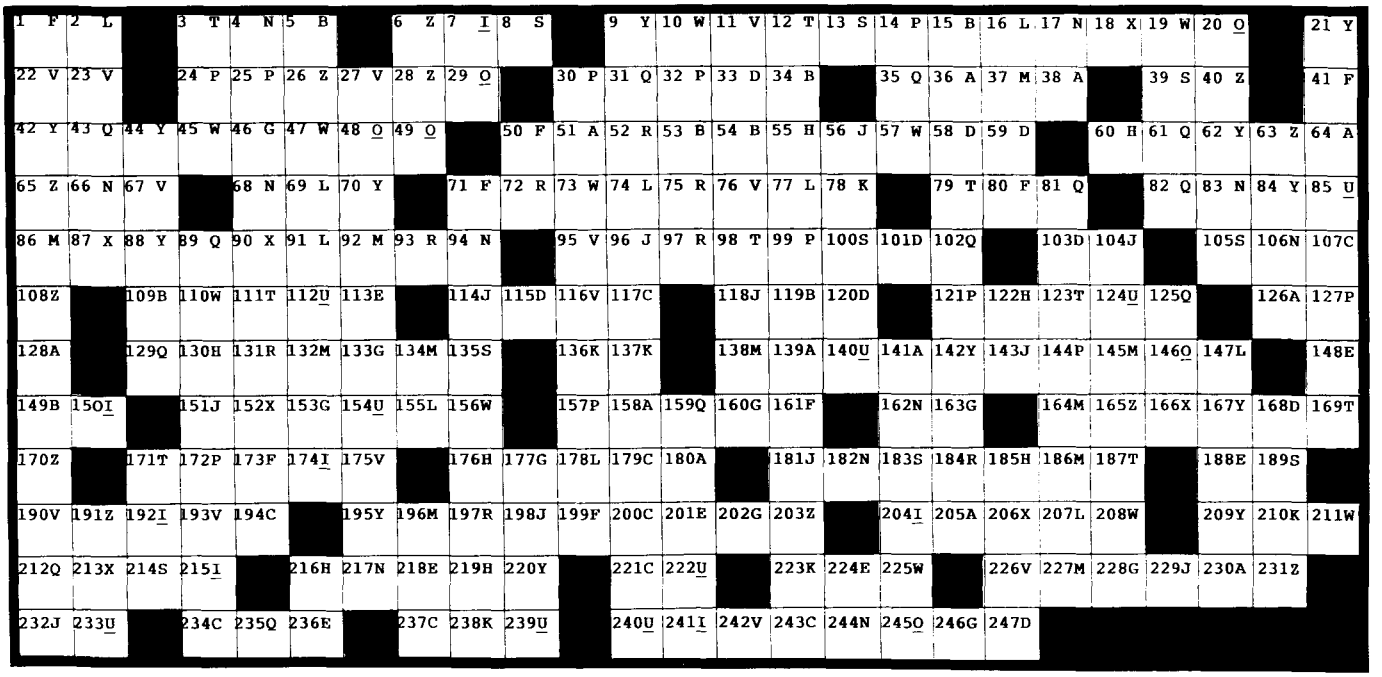
TRANS-O-GRAM / Siegfried R. Reiner



A. Possessed of courage and/or magnanimity — 64 51 230 139 180 205 128 158 141 126 36 38

B. Common neck injury — 109 34 15 54 5 119 53 149

C. State of great excitement — 237 200 107 234 179 117 243 221 194

D. Man-made — 247 59 120 101 115 168 58 103 33

E. Old-fashioned barn dance — 224 218 201 113 188 148 236

F. Undecorous, incorrect — 199 71 50 161 1 41 173 80

G. Infamous — 246 163 228 160 177 46 153 133 202

H. Wrestler — 176 130 185 216 219 122 55 60

I. Adherent of Aquinas — 215 7 150 192 241 174 204

J. Unscrupulous advantage-seeking — 232 198 181 143 56 114 96 104 229 151 118

K. Apprise, inform — 238 136 223 210 137 78

L. Two things Nehemiah did on hearing fate of Israel's remnant (2 words) — 2 74 207 16 155 91 147 178 69 77

M. Eban agitates (3 words) — 196 92 132 37 164 134 145 186 86 227 138

N. Insight — 217 94 106 4 17 244 68 162 182 66 83

O. Historic object of Franco-German strife, from the German side — 245 49 20 48 146 29

P. Witness Battle of Pittsburg Landing (2 words) — 30 25 144 121 172 14 127 32 157 99 24

Q. Ornamentation — 235 125 159 61 35 43 82 102 31 212 81 89 129

R. Child's sucker — 184 72 75 93 131 197 52 97

S. Post-honeymoon table fare — 183 8 189 39 13 105 135 100 214

T. Mechanism — 123 98 12 3 169 79 171 111 187

U. Arduous — 239 85 233 222 124 240 154 112 140

V. Despise Minerva's city (2 words) — 226 76 11 23 116 27 67 193 242 190 175 22 95

W. Detour — 211 225 156 57 73 208 47 45 10 110 19

X. Recognized freeman — 213 87 152 206 166 18 90

Y. Sacred Jewish symbol (3 words) — 220 195 44 88 62 70 42 209 84 21 167 142 9

Z. Replacement — 231 191 26 203 6 63 28 165 170 65 40 108

Solution to last issue's Trans-O-Gram. ABIGAIL ADAMS: On Independence: "You tell me of degrees of perfection to which human nature is capable of arriving, and I believe it, but at the same time lament that our admiration should arise from the scarcity of the instances."

We regret transcription errors in the September 11 Trans-O-Gram: Under letter S, number 43 should be 48, and under letter X, 133 should be 138.

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Are States' Constitutions Unconstitutional?

NEW YORK, AUGUST 15

During the recess from Washington, our legislators have an opportunity to reflect a little, and it would not be time lost if they gave thought to a prayer amendment. There are several reasons to do this. One, the restoration of traditional authority for local schools; a second, the elucidation of a constitutional disfigurement done over the last generation by the Supreme Court; a third, to rebuke the Supreme Court for its fanatical misinterpretation of the First Amendment.

But the question suddenly arises, Is a constitutional amendment necessary? When questioned early in the year about what had gone into the Contract with America, Newt Gingrich admitted that thought had been given to the prayer amendment but that since it required a two-thirds majority, this was a challenge better put off until other problems had been coped with. The failure of the Balanced Budget Amendment (although by a single vote in the Senate) reminded us of the difficulty of amassing a two-thirds majority. It is therefore especially bracing to consider alternative means of accomplishing the same end, devised by the constitutional historian Harry Jaffa of the Claremont Institute.

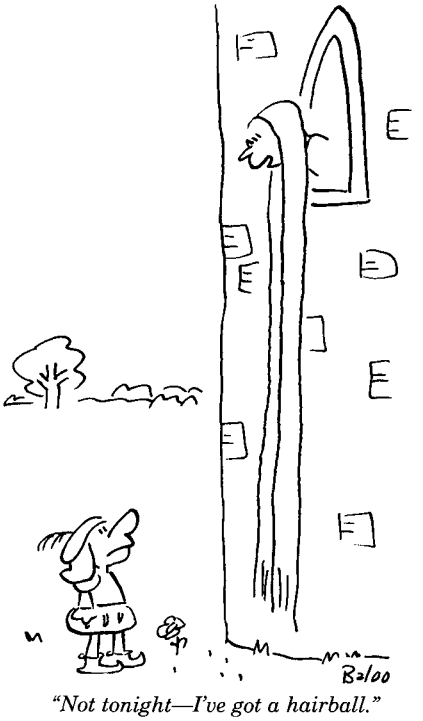
He reasons as follows. Forty-seven of our fifty states explicitly invoke the name of God in their own Constitutions. They vary in phrasing, but they are nowhere sectarian. By this is meant that the 47 states in question nowhere cite God using denominational language. The President's home state of Arkansas, for instance, launches its constitution by saying, "We the people of the State of Arkansas, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty, and desiring to perpetuate its blessings . . ." In Maine, the people acknowledge "with grateful hearts the goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe," while from Colorado we have the relatively Spartan intelligence that the people, "with profound reverence for the Supreme Ruler of the Universe," nevertheless authorize the election of Pat Schroeder to Congress.

Suppose that a joint resolution of the Congress, requiring only simple majorities in both houses, were to declare that children in public schools might lawfully recite voluntary prayers employing only such acknowledgment of divine power and goodness as is present in their own state constitution, or in the constitution of any other state? The Supreme Court could go beyond fuming and raging over the ensuing resumption of prayer in the public schools only by pronouncing the constitutions of 47 states to be unconstitutional. It is a reasonable guess that the Court would want to stop short of any such declaration.

And bear in mind that the state constitutions have provisions equivalent to the "no establishment" and "free exercise" clauses of the First Amendment. California, for instance, ordains that "Free exercise and enjoyment of religion without discrimination or preference are guaranteed. . . . The legislature shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." And we bear also in mind that every enabling act by the Congress for the admission of a state to the Union since the Civil War has had the following provision: "The Constitution of [the state being admitted] shall always be republican in form and shall not be repugnant to the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence."

These are freighted words in two senses. As regards the religious-freedom clauses, we are reminded historically that the 13 states admitted to the Union since the Civil War were scrutinized by Congress, which in ratifying their constitutions affirmed that they were admissible under the U.S. Constitution. More, the invocation of the Declaration of Independence, as an instrument to which the constitution of the aspiring state must not be "repugnant," strengthens the viability of the Declaration, which of course speaks of the rights with which we have been "endowed by [our] Creator." Such rights are "unalienable" because they are fixed eternally in "the laws of nature and of nature's God." It is always reassuring to know that some element more majestic than the God of legal positivism looks after and approves of our liberties.

So then it is up to Speaker Gingrich. □



"Not tonight—I've got a hairball."

Jerry Garcia, R I P

NEW YORK, AUGUST 18

If I ever heard a song played by the Grateful Dead I wasn't aware of it. If I had been, I'd have pricked up my ears and listened real hard because I have a memory. It is of a young man who came to work at my shop. He had just graduated from Harvard, wanted to do some opinion journalism, and qualified for a summer internship that stretched into two or three years.

It was toward the end of the decade of the Sixties that he drew me aside one day, after we had gone to press. He said that he had been to a concert by the Grateful Dead and that it was a wonderful experience, and that he would go again whenever the group was in reach, and he invited me to join him at one of the concerts, which I wish I had done.

I have to suppose that, like so many others, I would have survived the experience without such harm as finally came to Jerry Garcia and, 25 years before Garcia, to our young intern. He did his work, but with progressive listlessness. His editorial paragraphs had never been razor sharp but they had been trenchant and readable, and now they were murky.

Things got worse, and now came the trappings, which were conventional. It began with sandals, then went in the usual direction, though I don't remember that he ran a ring through his ear. When an anniversary issue was planned for the magazine he suddenly demanded that his "generation" be represented, so I told him to go ahead and write what he thought would be a useful essay.

I don't remember seeing it myself, but I

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was told not that it was unsuitable, or unfinished, or unprofessional, but that its meaning was impenetrable. At about that time an associate ten years older reported his (informed) opinion that our intern was going off the deep end. At a collegial staff lunch he once excused himself so abruptly as to provoke the melancholy conclusion that he had needed a quick jolt of whatever drug he was taking. One day he announced that he would be married, and soon brought in an addled flower child dressed as he dressed. One weekend they just faded away. A few years later we received formal invitations to a second marriage, to a South American. He went with his new bride to her country and taught English. In due course he sent us an article submission. It was potentially publishable but needed work, and the managing editor sent it back to him with recommended changes. We did not hear from him again, except after another interval of five years or so, when we learned he had married yet again, this time to a native, and gone off to live in the hills. Question before the house: Is Jerry Garcia in some way responsible for this?

The issue of *Newsweek* that put Garcia on the cover quoted in huge type the words of a 21-year-old college student. "It's a free life when you're at a show. It's all about happiness. I'd just take my watch off and want time to stop." It isn't easy to rail against anyone who brings happiness, and one has to assume that many, perhaps the majority, of those who heard "shows" by the Grateful Dead achieved their highs without the use of intoxicants. But something unusual accounted for the young Americans, pictures of them reproduced in the days just gone by, exhibiting Dionysiac pleasure in their role as Deadheads. Exuberance finds its forms throughout the world and concentrates its energies on the young. But is the joy unconfined? Ought it to be?

Jerry Garcia died only a week after leaving the Betty Ford Center. He is quoted as having said two years ago that, really, he needed to do something to restore his health, otherwise he would be dead, like "two years from now." He went on schedule, and is said to have died with a smile on his face, no doubt because he was a happy man but also because he made so many others happy. But he also killed, if that's the right word for such as our intern, a lot of people. And although he had a pulsating forum world wide for thirty years and knew from his own experience what his habits were doing to him, he never went public on it, not really. One has to suppose, sadly, that in his case, going public on his problem, extending a truly firm handshake to his legions, would have required the dramatic gesture of retiring from the stage. If he had done so, it would not have been wounding to those of us who were never exposed to Jerry Garcia's special intoxicant, but, if he had done so, how many would have had better prospects for health, love, and longer lives? □

Where Does Fuhrman Take Us?

NEW YORK, AUGUST 25

One account analyzes the Mark Fuhrman situation as follows: If the exposure of the tapes comes in as the closing episode in the trial, the probability is high that the disgust and loathing for Detective Fuhrman (richly deserved) will provoke in the jury a sentiment extraneous to the question, Did O. J. kill his former wife and her companion? Instead, the analysis goes on, the jurors will ask themselves, How can we express our disgust? Well—the analyst concludes—by voting, Not Guilty.

The prosecution will of course make an earnest, desperate attempt to situate the tapes in context. Marcia Clark will argue that Houdini himself could not have contrived to arrange the evidence against O. J. with which the prosecution has made its case. The chief of police in Los Angeles, Mr. Willie Williams, told a press conference that "it is inconceivable to believe that for this one murder 10, 20, 30, or 40 people got together to plot against Mr. Simpson." Only Oliver Stone could stitch together a plot to do in O. J. that originated at two in the morning and matured with a bloody glove at his residence, and bloodstains that identified O. J., his ex-wife, and Mr. Goldman here and there along the route from the scene of the crime back to Simpson's residence.

But the thinking at the moment is that the jury will waive matters that have dulled in memories of men and women who must be feeling as though they had been sentenced to perpetual isolation during a seemingly endless trial. Human sensibilities are as they are, and the jurors are not likely to blame the defense for their incarceration. The enemy will be the Establishment: the judge who ordained their isolation, the prosecution that droned on endlessly, and, above all, the Los Angeles Police Department, which retained in its ranks someone who—if the tapes are to be believed—lives in fury against the existence of blacks, women, homosexuals, and civil rights.

It is mystifying what exactly were the objectives of Mr. Fuhrman in his recorded conversations with Laura Hart McKinny, the scholar at the North Carolina School of Arts, starting in 1985. He reported to her (according to one passage in the tapes) how on one occasion he and fellow officers handled four suspects. "We basically tortured them. We broke 'em. Their faces were just mush. They had pictures of the walls with blood all the way to the ceiling and finger marks of [them] trying to crawl out of the room." A messy business, handling suspects in that way. It required Mr. Fuhrman and his fellow law enforcers to clean themselves up with a garden hose.

Now the Fuhrman narrative gives one pause. It does not surprise that here and there one comes upon sadists, whether in Los Angeles or in Gulag. The viewers of the Rodney King beating tend to reason, Why should we be surprised? Such evidently is the way the police in Los Angeles, and perhaps elsewhere, routinely act. But the Rodney King story is complicated. Extensive investigations revealed that there was a genuine, spastic concern that King might be armed, might have intended his own impetuous defense using a weapon. But in the Fuhrman telling of the treatment of four suspects there would seem to be nothing of that. It was clinical sadism.

Already a quiet investigation by the Los Angeles Police has begun, designed, no doubt, to track the record of men handled over the years by Detective Fuhrman. Why did they not complain of their treatment by him? And if there was a record of Fuhrman engaged in such activity, why was he retained in the force? How will he be handled by the law? As a perjurer? He swore under oath that he had not used the term "nigger" when manifestly he had done so, using the word not in the detached tones of a storyteller, but with invidious gusto. "You're talking sh--. You sound like a nigger."

It is endlessly fascinating. Fuhrman the cool bigot. O. J., who earned the confidence of his private investigator because of the coolness of his behavior in Chicago in the hours immediately after the killing. How could somebody so casual in his conduct during those hours before being told of his ex-wife's murder be guilty? But of course such reasoning, from the particular to the general, would justify confidence that the Fuhrman observed on the witness stand could not be the same Fuhrman who spoke into those tapes.

The jury's responsibility in this case is awesome, extending far beyond the question of O. J.'s guilt or innocence. It touches on the recognition of the awful baseness of which human beings—Americans—are capable. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

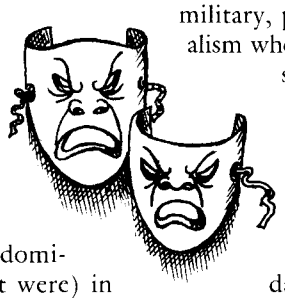
I HAVE never read any books by the Italian novelist Carl Coccioli, but I ran across a quotation from one in 1979 that I have been saving ever since. The clipping is yellowed now but the message is ominously fresh:

"The only thing that Americans have not done in their masochistic games is to declare war on themselves."

Masochism is not all whips and chains and twisted sexuality. The most insidious kind has nothing to do with sex, nor even with the new brand of sex that feminists call gender. It is, in fact, one of the few destructive neuroses left that does not require a bedroom.

I refer to parlor masochism.

A parlor masochist is anyone, male or female, who prefaces every opinion with "Correct me if I'm wrong," who betrays an eagerness to accept the views of others, who placates his enemies and strives for their good opinion, who explains too much and is always apologizing.



Parlor masochism is the dominant (as it were) force (as it were) in American life. Deflecting hostility has become our national art form. Nothing more accurately measures our diminishing strength of character than the way we settle our differences. Where once we said "Let's step outside," we now say "Let's have lunch."

Clintons come and Clintons go, but the master mold of parlor masochism is still George Bush. Whenever he caught himself in a moment of strength, horror seemed to set in at once. Whether it was his press conference on the Panama crisis ("I didn't get angry, I didn't get angry . . . I wouldn't mind using force if it could be done in a prudent manner") or his panicky haste in ending the Gulf War, he always recalled the bride in the doggerel: "Oh, mercy, look what I've done! / Married the father instead of the son!"

His staff covered his kinder-and-gentler compulsion with a multitude of spins, usually attributing it to good breeding, but after the 1992 election the truth peeped out. Commenting on the cloying amiability that Bush showed Clinton during the transition, a senior administration official told the *Washington Times*: "It's like they've been dating or something." Another said simply: "It's getting sick."

It is. A checklist for parlor masochism must begin with the United States Navy, which is so eager to help feminists destroy American sea power that it has changed its rallying cry to "I have not yet begun to cooperate with the investigation."

Marine colonel Fred Peck, testifying before Congress against gays in the military, personified unswerving realism when he said that his own gay son should not be allowed to serve. But then came the well-publicized meeting with his son's lover. "By the end of the weekend," young Peck told the media, "my dad was introducing him to his friends as his son-in-law."

Florida Supreme Court judge Rosemary Barkett, vacating a death sentence, observed that the defendant "is a good man, except that he sometimes kills people."

Reginald Denny, pulled from his truck in the Los Angeles riots and beaten nearly to death, said of his attackers, "They don't look like bad guys. They look like guys I could hang with." He didn't want them to go to jail. "I'd give them a chance," he said, and recommended community service. The prospect of seeing them again at their trial did not disturb him; "I'll crack them a smile and wink at them," he promised. Then he hugged their mothers. Could anything make this man mad? Yes: the "white supremacists" who supported him. "They're nuts," he ruled. "They're definitely a brick shy of a load. It's a human issue, not a racist issue."

In Richmond, mothers of children molested by a brutal 13-year-old boy met with the boy's parents for a "dialogue" described in the press as "rage turned to compassion." Rage is always turning to compassion in Parlor Masochist America. Whenever furious citizens form groups with names that begin "Save Our," "Take Back," or "Stop the," stand by for an ad hoc *agape*.

Mary McGrory demonstrated the parlor masochist's favorite logical fallacy. *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*—"after this, therefore because of this"—permits the transfer of appeasement between unconnected events. In a column on the confirmation battle of Dr. Henry Foster written shortly after the Oklahoma City bombing, Miss McGrory speculated that Foster would, after all, be confirmed as surgeon general because of the "Oklahoma effect, that immeasurable but unmistakable shift in the public, that after the ultimate in violence and hatred, has lost any taste for mean and negative."

LIKE every good American disease, parlor masochism does not discriminate: conservatives catch it, too. Columnist Charles Krauthammer has recommended scrapping affirmative action, which benefits minorities who are not disadvantaged, and replacing it with a monetary reparation for blacks only. Forget Aleuts and Pago Pagoans; "America's sin was against blacks," he wrote in *Time*, and suggested a one-time payment of $100,000 for every black family of four, the money to come from a ten-year 75-cent gas tax.

Can America's "turn to the Right" survive such abject cringing? George Will has identified "four facets of the nation's fraying" as conservatives see it: affirmative action, illegal immigration, welfare, and crime. These are the same four subjects that scare all too many conservative politicians into backpedaling chatter about "big tents." Will they follow through and abolish these scourges? Or will they decide that they have married the father instead of the son and recoil from their initial resolve?

As our gorgeous mosaic comes uncaulked, parlor masochists are trying so hard to keep the multicultural peace that they have fallen into the habit of simply keeping the peace, any peace, without even knowing why they're doing it. The day after my local paper quoted me as saying, "College professors are incapable of earning a living with either their minds or their hands," a college professor phoned me—and invited me to lunch. □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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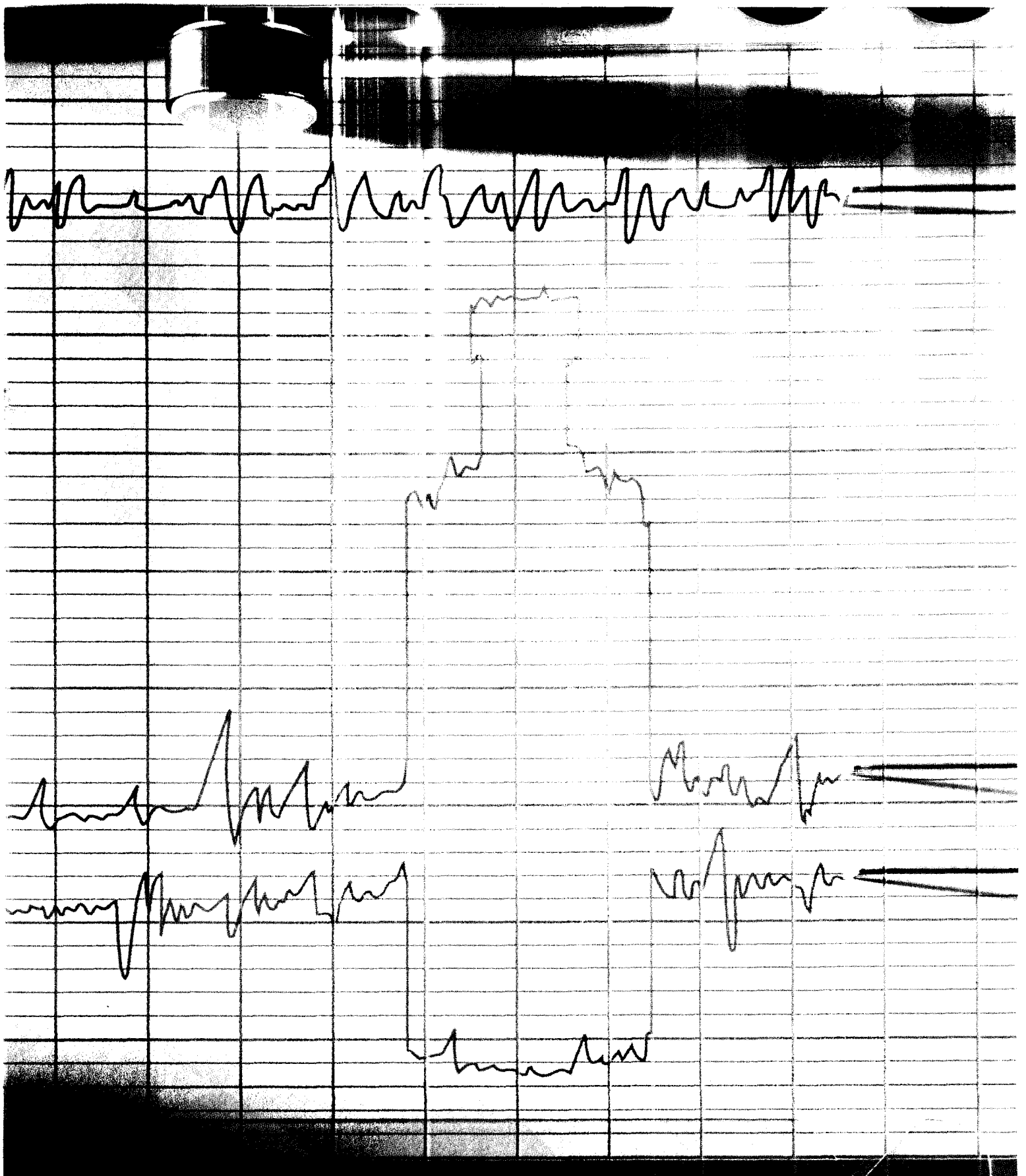

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